

THE
AMERICAN COMEDY

CHESTER ALLEN SMITH

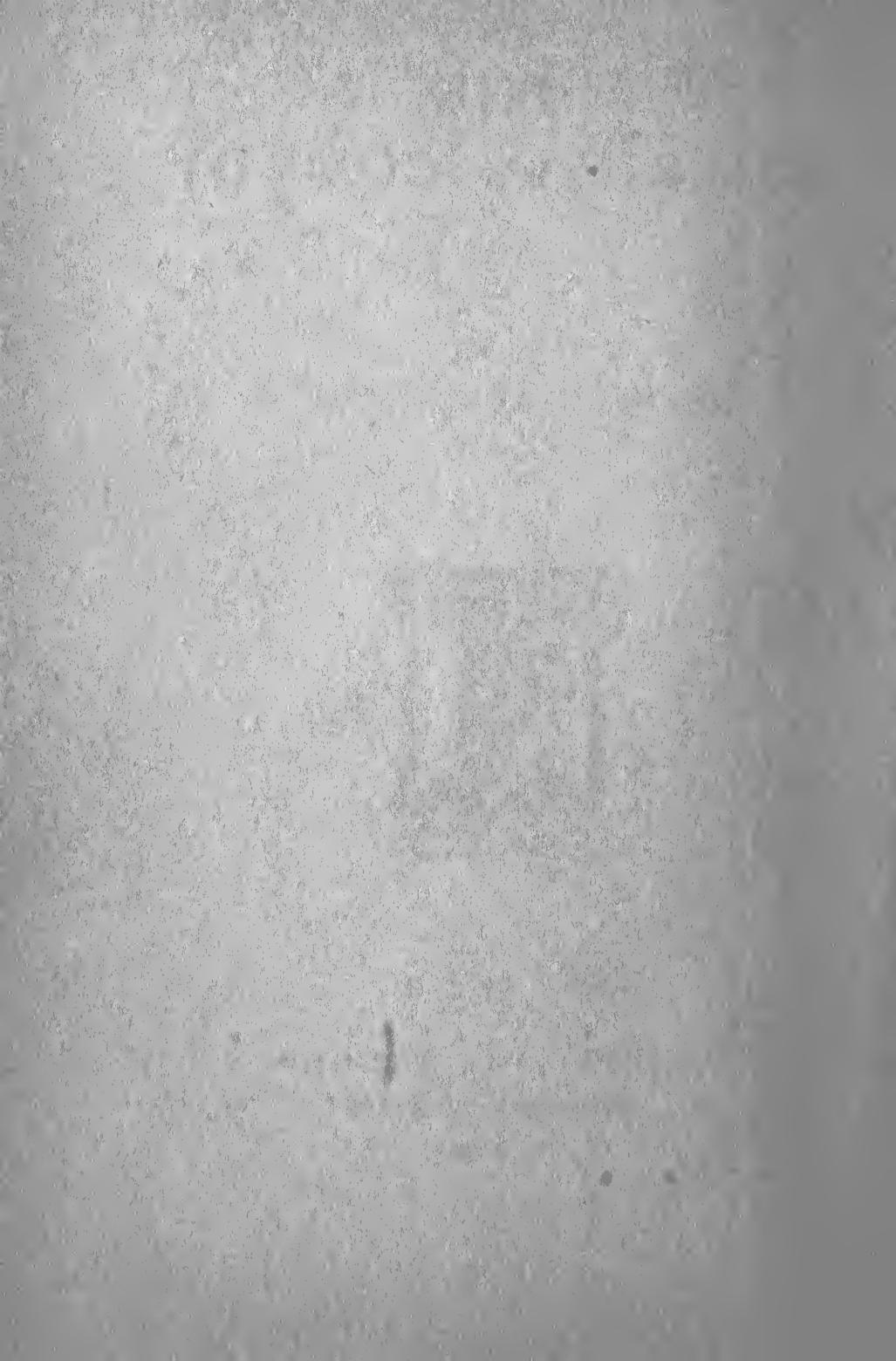


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BY
CHESTER ALLEN SMITH



RICHARD G. BADGER
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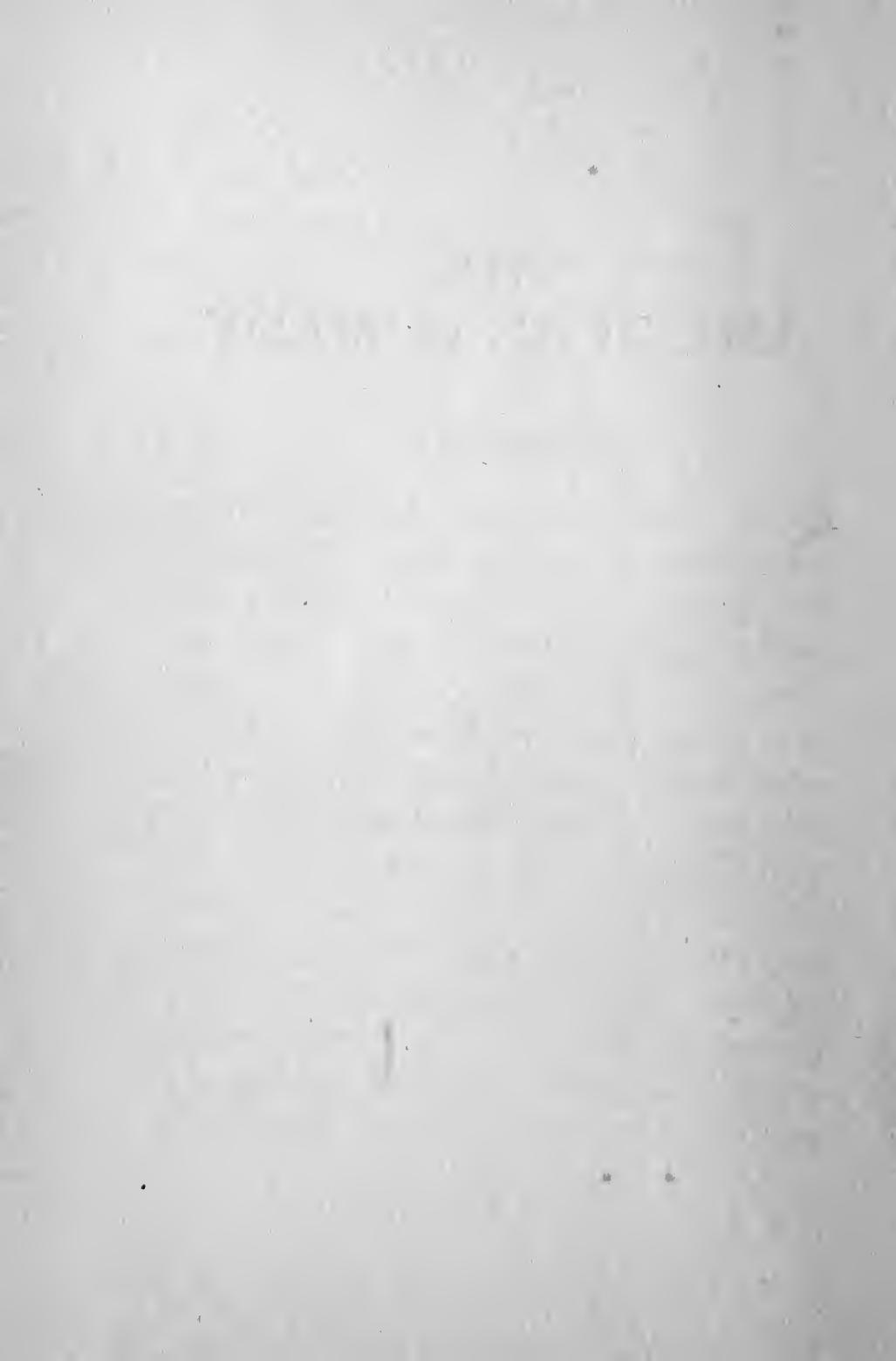
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CHAPTER I

SKY VIEW is a typical American village. It is built along Main Street, which begins down by the river and finally loses itself in a country highway over the hill. There are other streets, but they are little more than lanes or byways, while Main Street boasts a sidewalk and is curbed and guttered. It is the center of the business and social life of the town. Here is the village bank, a potent force in village affairs, even if it is housed in a one-story frame structure which looks ready to tumble down. Here is the doctor's office and the blacksmith's shop; the village hotel, a ramshackle old building which seldom houses a guest; the editor's office, a sacred place in the

eyes of the village folk, where in dull hours of the day a few worthies who belong to the inner circle play dominoes and discuss the latest news. Here is the Post Office, a busy place when each mail arrives. On one side of the Post Office is a butcher's shop and on the other side is a lawyer's office; while here and there on either side of the street are the grocery stores, not like the grocery stores of the large town or city, which are only out for business, but rather headquarters for the men of the place, who meet there evenings to exchange the latest gossip and to discuss the topics of the day.

Sky View is the metropolis of Poquogg County. Poquogg County is so rough, so full of rocks, with mountains and hills and lakes all jumbled together in such hopeless confusion, that it is considered by local wiseacres to have been the last part of the earth that was made. The wonder is that there is any room within its confines for farms or fields or even roads. Its people have long been famous among the neighboring counties as horse jockeys, ped-

dlers, charcoal burners and auctioneers, but their lasting fame will rest upon their devotion to Politics. Politics is their ruling passion. Any Poquogg County farmer will leave his haying to go to a political meeting. To take no interest in Politics is a disgrace. To neglect to vote is to invite social ostracism.

The county has played an important part in the Politics of the country. Her political leaders have held high places in the national councils of their Parties. Her favorite sons have won honor in the Legislature of the State, in the Congress of the Nation, and one served with distinction as Governor and later entered national Politics as a member of the Cabinet.

In Sky View, Poquogg County's outlet on the river, and which in all things political reflects the spirit of the county, Nathaniel Whittleback began his career. He came of Yankee and Dutch parentage. His father when a youth left the Whittleback homestead in Connecticut for the West, but got no farther than Sky View. Here he fell in love with the only daughter of

old Peter Vanderwert, tavern-keeper and riverman. After their marriage he became a prosperous wood dealer, went into Politics, held successively the offices of Justice of the Peace, Sheriff, and County Clerk, and met an untimely death by parading in the rain to celebrate a victory of his Party at a national election. Meeting his death in this way he was regarded as a martyr to Politics, and was forever held in high esteem by all the people of the county.

Young Whittleback seemed to inherit few of his father's traits of character, taking more after his Dutch ancestry, and while in later years, when he had become famous, some old residents discovered that he had been remarkable even as a child, the truth is that his boyhood was not unlike that of the average boy of a country town. He graduated from the village school, made the usual sight-seeing excursions to neighboring cities, went into the wood business with his father, and gave no promise of ever rising above the level of an ordinary country merchant. Upon his father's death he found himself in possession of a com-

fortable fortune, which was augmented on the death of his mother by the legacy which he received from the Vanderwert estate.

In build he was not unlike his Yankee forbears, tall and angular; but all his movements were made with slowness and deliberation. This would have given him an appearance of age had it not been counteracted by his round, smooth face, an inheritance from his Dutch ancestors, from whom he had also inherited an amiable disposition and a habit of taking things as they came. Although at the entrance to middle life, he was still unmarried, a condition of affairs for which we must confess our inability to offer a convincing excuse. Being in comfortable circumstances financially, he was disposed to take the world very easy. He was not actively interested in Politics. This caused him to be regarded as unique, but was not in his case taken as a fault. Indeed, instead of lessening his popularity, it gave him an added distinction as a man who dared to be, or who was, at any rate, different from the other citizens of the community.

With this brief introduction we present him to the mercy of our indulgent readers, merely asking that, like all honest jurors, they withhold their judgment until the record of his deeds is finally submitted to them.

CHAPTER II

AS you walked up Main Street in Sky View you saw just beyond the Post Office a building which attracted attention by the large black letters painted across its front: THE SKY VIEW HOME CLUB. It was the home of the Club's dozen members, with its own steward and its own cook, who boasted he could cook the best meal in the county, and where it was worth one's while to live. The membership was restricted to twelve, and there was always a large waiting list, for the Club played an important part in village affairs and had a famous cellar, as well, and its "Hall" with its great fireplace where the members gathered evenings was the dream of every unmarried man in Sky View, and of some married ones for that matter.

A score or so of years before this history begins a number of gentlemen who had no

homes and who had grown weary of leaving the village hotel for the boarding houses, only to return to the hotel again, in the hope of improving their condition, and as a protest against hotels and boarding houses in general and those of Sky View in particular, determined to build a home of their own where they would be untroubled by inquisitive landladies or obtrusive chambermaids.

No sooner had their determination got abroad than it raised a storm of protest, not only from the unattached females of the community, but from those matrons who ruled over the destinies of homes. The Sewing Circle held several sessions to consider the matter, and even went so far as to insert a protest in *The Clarion*. If the male world should evolve such a scheme of life as this and carry it out, they declared, women must take a back seat.

But the men persisted: They rented a large but somewhat dilapidated building on Main Street, made extensive improvements, and on the day of the formal opening of their home effectually overcame all opposition to their plan

by giving a reception to the women of the village. Men who would invite women to their home and treat them to such bountiful refreshments could not be so bad after all, and as only twelve could belong to the Club any way, they surely could not undermine the foundations of society.

So all opposition melted away, and the Sky View Home Club now numbered some of the leading men of the village among its members: Here lived Hon. Henrick Scouten, Postmaster and Republican leader of the county; Jerome Alexander Tubbmann, Sky View's leading attorney; the president, Solomon Costaine, a rich old bachelor, who had continued to live a bachelor in spite of all the wiles of all the designing females of the township; Mr. Dusenbury, who was regarded with great awe because of his learning; and Joshua Harbin, one of Sky View's leading merchants, who held mortgages on more places than you could count;—men who will play no small part in this history, and with whom Mr. Whittleback, who later became a member of the Club, thought it an honor to associate.

CHAPTER III

MRS. BUSH always maintained that but for her the "reform movement" never would have begun and Mr. Whittleback never would have become famous.

Mrs. Bush was a widow who kept a small confectionery store opposite the Post Office. She was tall and slim and wore spectacles. Because she was near sighted and slightly stooped she gave you the impression of being always on the lookout to discover something. She was reputed to know the history of every inhabitant of the village and her store was the clearing house for all the news of the vicinity.

Mrs. Bush had two grievances: The manner of living indulged in by the members of the Home Club, and the corruption which she claimed existed in the village government. Coming down stairs one morning and finding that her store had been broken into during the

night, she decided to unburden her mind to Mr. Harbin, the only member of the Club with whom she had any acquaintance.

"Have you got your interest money ready, Mrs. Bush?" Mr. Harbin inquired as soon as she opened the door of his office.

Mr. Harbin was not a handsome man. He had a pinched, drawn face, and a wolfish eye, and everybody who owed him money was afraid of him. Mrs. Bush did not regard him as particularly eligible, he loved money too well; nevertheless, she gave him her choicest smile and asked him how he was.

"Times are hard, Mrs. Bush. It's a hard world anyway. The world has gone mad in a great rush for money and if a man is to keep up with the world he has to be going, going, going, all the time."

"You're always complaining, Mr. Harbin. But I've come down this morning to make a complaint myself."

A complaint! In the name of all the money in the world for what could Mrs. Bush complain about Joshua Harbin? He went to

church every Sunday and read his Bible every day. What had he done?

Then Mrs. Bush told him what had happened.

And furthermore, she continued, she was robbed in other ways than that, and not only she, but all the rest of the people. Money was raised to clean the streets, which were never cleaned. Who got the money? Money was raised to feed the prisoners in the jail, but there were never any prisoners in the jail. Who got the money? Money was raised for a policeman to patrol the streets nights. Why didn't he do it?

When she paused to take breath, Mr. Harbin asked why she complained to him. Why did she not complain to the village President or the Board of Trustees?

Because, she said, they were all linked in together. Mr. Harbin knew that as well as she did, if he wasn't too busy making money to think of it, and if Mr. Harbin didn't know it, some of those men who belonged to this Home Club knew it, and she had made up her mind

to complain to the Club. Everybody was saying what a great Club it was and she would see what it would do.

She then asked Mr. Harbin if he would report her complaint to the Club.

Mr. Harbin said he would, but he could not say it would result in any good. He was himself so busy he could not attend to such matters, and he supposed every other member was in like position.

"And you might tell 'em, too," Mrs. Bush said as she turned to go, "that letting the Public's affairs take care of themselves isn't any more than is to be expected from men who go off and live by themselves and let good women who would make good wives live by themselves."

CHAPTER IV

THE Hon. Henrick Scouten was a smiling, smooth-faced man, with pink cheeks and blond hair. The business of his life was to strengthen the Poquogg County Republican Organization, of which he was the leader, to get patronage for its members, and to increase the majorities of Republican candidates at every election. He was always doing people favors, not that he cared about helping any one, but because it might win votes for his Party. He sought the respect of the community, for that would add to his political strength and continue him as postmaster. He always had good words and bland smiles and hearty hand-shakes for every one. He had a very confidential way of talking, as though you were the one person in the world whom he considered worthy to share his confidence, yet he seldom stated anything positively; he simply suggested.

You might talk with him for a day or a week, but you would not find out anything he did not wish you to know.

He called upon Mr. Whittleback the morning following the receipt by the Home Club of Mrs. Bush's complaint, which Mr. Whittleback had been selected to investigate, and asked how the Investigating Committee was getting on. Mr. Whittleback said the Committee was ready for business.

"Good," said Mr. Scouten. "I have a proposal to make. I asked to have you appointed as the Investigating Committee. I've been watching you for some time and I think you're the man we want—I mean for The Organization. You know in Politics we're always looking for available men. Everybody has always wondered why you never went into Politics. Now is the time. The village President is fighting The Organization, and we need a strong man to run in his place. There have been some irregularities going on. The thing to do is for you to discover and expose them

and then run for President yourself. You will be elected without question."

Mr. Whittleback thought that would depend somewhat on who was nominated against him.

"No, everything will be easy sailing, for you will have The Organization with you and that is the main thing. Of course in this matter I represent The Organization."

"What is The Organization?" inquired Mr. Whittleback.

"Now, Mr. Whittleback," replied Mr. Scouten, laughing, "don't ask too many questions. That's one thing you have to learn in Politics. All that will come in good time, but it's enough to know now that my proposal comes from The Organization."

"There is only one thing which would induce me to run for office and that is the hope that I might be of service to the people."

"That sentiment, Mr. Whittleback, does you much credit. It is this opportunity I offer you. Political organizations are good things if for no other reason than that they are always finding new men to serve the people and I think

the people will never have cause to regret that we have chosen you."

And Mr. Whittleback, believing that an acceptance of Mr. Scouten's proposal would give him a chance to serve the people, said yes, and entered with enthusiasm upon the work of investigation.

CHAPTER V

M R. WHITTLEBACK had been as attentive to public affairs as the average citizen. An honest man himself and dealing honestly in his own business, when he saw a man elected to office he assumed he would conduct the Public's affairs as honestly as his private affairs. The conditions he found existing in Sky View opened his eyes to the need of the Public taking an interest in its affairs. When he found that one hundred dollars had been appropriated every year to feed prisoners in the village jail, and also learned that there had been no prisoners confined in the jail for three years, it was apparent that the keeper of the jail had money which belonged to the Public. When he found the village had been paying a thousand dollars yearly to have the garbage removed, and that the village President had sold this garbage to the railroad under a private contract, he con-

cluded the President had been taking the Public's money. It was only with the greatest difficulty that Mr. Whittleback could learn these facts, and others of similar character, for old Peter Sosser, the village clerk, had a system of bookkeeping all his own, which nobody could understand without his help, and he was not disposed to render Mr. Whittleback any assistance. Mike Rafferty, Sky View's only policeman, had long been paid a yearly sum to patrol the streets at night, yet he was never known to be on duty more than once a month.

Mr. Whittleback was shocked to find such dishonesty and negligence in public servants who were known to be honest and careful in their private affairs, but he was no less surprised to find how unconcerned the Public had been about the management of its business. And he had been no less indifferent than the rest. He had paid his taxes, read *The Clarion*, voted his Party ticket, listened to speeches on Honesty delivered by the Party's orators, but he had never bothered to find out whether or not the Public's money was being properly spent or

26 THE AMERICAN COMEDY

whether or not public servants were doing their duty.

Mr. Whittleback was a very different man from Mr. Harbin. That gentleman knew nothing about public affairs, for he cared nothing about them; he could see no profit in bothering with them; seldom did he avail himself of the privilege of voting, unless a proposition came up to increase taxes to make an improvement, when he always voted no. But Mr. Whittleback bitterly regretted his neglect of public affairs. To be sure, he had been no worse than his fellow citizens, and yet he concluded it was almost a crime for a citizen to take no interest in public affairs, for if the Public paid more attention to its affairs there would be fewer men enriching themselves because of the Public's ignorance.

Now Mr. Whittleback would atone for his neglect, he would do all in his power to reform conditions, and as the first means to this end he would bring the facts he had discovered to the attention of the people. The editor of

The Clarion would surely be glad to print them.

The editor was very sorry, but the village officials were customers of his and he could not afford to lose their patronage by printing anything which would reflect upon their administration. He would be very glad, however, to sell Mr. Whittleback space and to insert his discoveries in the form of advertising matter. This method Mr. Whittleback was obliged to adopt, for *The Clarion* was the only newspaper in the village.

Now Mr. Whittleback's greatest surprise was in store for him, for the publication of his discoveries aroused the anger of many respected citizens who thought their business might be interfered with. Several brick makers in towns farther down the river threatened to buy no more wood of him. Many of Sky View's "representative citizens" refused to speak to him; others abused him for doing that which, they said, would break up the Party and give not only the village election but the succeeding county election to the Democrats;

while others ridiculed the whole proceeding. In this last class was the distinguished Mr. Tubbmann. This did not trouble Mr. Whittleback very much, for Mr. Tubbmann was nominally a Democrat, until it began to be rumored that he was to be employed to reply to Mr. Whittleback's charges. This was so important a matter that Mr. Whittleback went to the Post Office to consult Mr. Scouten about it.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Whittleback," said Mr. Scouten, giving him a hearty handshake, and leading him into his private office. "Sit down and have a cigar."

Mr. Whittleback began at once on the subject of Mr. Tubbmann and the investigation.

"How long has the investigation been going on, Mr. Whittleback?"

"Three weeks."

"And they're berating you and laughing at you and threatening you and everybody is talking about it?"

"Yes, I'll be blessed if they aren't going for me at a great rate. I'm an outcast.

Instead of being a public benefactor you would think I was a public enemy."

"The Public is becoming interested. It's a good symptom. The most difficult thing is to get the Public interested in its own affairs. It's time, though, to get a recruit. Let's go see Tubbmann."

CHAPTER VI

MR. Tubbmann was the most picturesque man in Sky View. It was not so much because of his imposing figure, his great head of curly white hair, or his fine face and clear blue eyes; it was the distinctive way in which he carried himself, with the head erect and the eyes always gazing off into space, his manner of doing the most trivial things as though they were the most important, and the most important things as though they were the most trivial, that made him the most unique character in the village. Whenever he passed along the street with his stately stride, swinging his right hand forward with a determined air, people looked out of their windows and said: "There goes Mr. Tubbmann. What a fine walk he has," or, "What a splendid appearance he makes," and they wondered why he had never become Governor or Senator or even President.

Mr. Tubbmann always claimed to be engaged on an important case. When Mr. Scouten and Mr. Whittleback entered his office he had his table full of books, but he was pacing up and down the floor wondering what he could do to remedy the low state of his finances. He said, "Good morning, gentlemen," and condescended so far as to shake hands.

"I know you're a busy man, Mr. Tubbmann," said Mr. Scouten. "But Mr. Whittleback and I had a little matter we wished to discuss with you."

Mr. Tubbmann motioned them to take seats, but still continued to pace the floor.

"You know, Mr. Tubbmann," Mr. Scouten continued, "we're all trying to serve the Public."

Mr. Tubbmann stopped suddenly, turned to Mr. Scouten and exclaimed: "Serve the Public! Why, there isn't one man in six who's in Politics to serve the Public."

"Don't be too hard on us politicians, Mr. Tubbmann."

"Hard on you! Do you think I was born

yesterday, Scouten? Do you think I don't understand the present political system? Do you think I don't know that the Public's welfare is considered only so far as it adds to the welfare of the Parties?"

"Well I'll be blessed!" ejaculated Mr. Whittleback.

"Are you ambitious to serve the Public, Whittleback?" Mr. Tubbmann continued, turning to that gentleman. "If you are, you don't want to be travelling around with Scouten."

"We came here this morning, Mr. Tubbmann," interposed Mr. Scouten, "to see if you would make a little deal with us in the matter of Politics."

"Come into the back room," responded Mr. Tubbmann, as he led the way into his private office and handed out a box of cigars. "Sit down and make yourselves at home."

"In the first place, Mr. Tubbmann," continued Mr. Scouten, after the cigars were lighted, "would you have any scruples about supporting a man who was not of your Party?"

"Scruples!" rejoined Mr. Tubbmann, with

a flourish of his right arm. "Scruples! Why, they're both run the same, aren't they? They both play the game the same way."

"There, that's settled. Now, Mr. Tubbmann, from what we have been hearing we have come to the conclusion that you don't think much of this investigation."

"No," replied Mr. Tubbmann with emphasis. "A lot of nonsense."

"There's no denying the fact that there are things that need investigation," said Mr. Scousten. "A Republican might as well get the credit of these reforms as some Democrat. Why can't Mr. Whittleback become popular by reforming his own Party? Then when he's nominated for village President he will be elected. Now if you will give Mr. Whittleback your support in this investigation and help elect him, we will appoint you village counsel."

Mr. Tubbmann said he could hardly attend to any extra work, being engaged on a very important case just then, but if he could render any service to his friends it could never be said of Jerome Alexander Tubbmann, a member of

the Bar for thirty years, that he had failed to do so.

"This President and these Trustees haven't been representing the people," interposed Mr. Whittleback with vehemence. "Why should we have to wait until election day to get them out of office? They should be removed at once."

"Pass an ordinance permitting the people to vote office holders out of office if they aren't satisfied with them," replied Mr. Tubbmann.

"A fine suggestion, Mr. Tubbmann, a fine suggestion. That shall be one of my recommendations. And not only in this village should that be possible, but all over the State."

"Go to the Capital and have a Bill passed making it a law throughout the State. You can do that before the Legislature closes this spring," said Mr. Tubbmann, and gave his right arm a magnificent flourish, as though the passage of the Bill were a very simple matter.

"Another fine suggestion," exclaimed Mr. Whittleback with enthusiasm. "Mr. Scouten, this is encouraging."

"Yes," replied that gentleman. "It's time you had some encouragement, Mr. Whittleback. Now I think it's time to have a public meeting. I would like to have you attend the public meeting, Mr. Tubbmann, and say something nice about our friend here."

"There won't be any trouble on that line, Scouten. We'll make Whittleback just as great a man as you say."

"Thank you, Mr. Tubbmann," said Mr. Scouten, "and congratulations also. You are Mr. Whittleback's first recruit."

CHAPTER VII

THE public meeting had been so well advertised that the Town Hall was filled to overflowing long before the hour it was announced to begin. There were Democrats and Republicans, women and children, visitors from the interior of the county, district leaders of both Parties. Some came to laugh, others to gibe, but most came from mere curiosity. The village band occupied a portion of the platform and kept the audience in good humor until the hour arrived. Then the members of the Sky View Home Club ascended the platform and took the seats which had been reserved for them. Their appearance was greeted by a cheer from Mr. Scouten's lieutenants, who were stationed about the hall. A few minutes later when the band had stopped and all was quiet in came Mr. Whittleback escorted by Mr. Scouten and Mr. Tubbmann. A thunder of

applause greeted his entrance. The members of the Club stood up and hurrahed for him, the band played, "See the Conquering Hero Come," and the children waved flags and shouted at the top of their voices. No one was more surprised at this demonstration than Mr. Whittleback himself. He had let Mr. Scouten make the arrangements for the meeting. "The only thing you will have to do," Mr. Scouten had told him, "will be to make your report and give your recommendations." If Mr. Whittleback was surprised at the demonstration, the crowd were no less surprised to see the Hon. Henrick Scouten and Jerome Alexander Tubbmann as his escort, and their surprise was not diminished when Mr. Tubbmann came to the front of the platform and began to address them.

"My friends," he exclaimed, running the fingers of his right hand rapidly through his hair, "we meet here to-night as citizens." Applause by the lieutenants. "We're American citizens. I would rather be a citizen of America than of any other country under the

sun. We don't have to have a King and Lords and Dukes to govern us. We govern ourselves." More applause. "When it comes to a question of citizenship, I'm not a party man, I'm an American." Again the lieutenants led the cheering in which the audience joined. He then paid a fine tribute to the Sky View Home Club and explained that when a complaint had been made to the Club in regard to village affairs, the Club had appointed as a committee to investigate "that distinguished citizen of our village, who is ever willing to sacrifice his own comfort to the good of the Public, Nathaniel Whittleback." Such cheering and shouting Mr. Whittleback had never before heard in all his life, and to think that it was all for him. "We have met here to-night," Mr. Tubbmann continued, "to hear his report. Whom will you have for your chairman?"

Mr. Scouten was nominated amid applause, for the Democrats in the audience were too much surprised at Mr. Tubbman's speech to make a nomination. There were a dozen sec-

onds and Mr. Scouten was elected by acclama-tion.

"Fellow citizens," he said, coming forward, "I am glad to see so many of you here tonight. It speaks well for the cause of Ameri-can liberty."

The lieutenants began to cheer, but Mr. Scou-ten checked them by a wave of his hand.

It was not to be expected, he continued, that evils would not creep into popular government, but when wrongs were discovered they should be righted, no matter where found, and the people were indebted to the man who discov-ered them.

"It's a damned lie!" shouted old Mike Raf-ferty, as he arose from his seat, resplendent in his blue coat and brass buttons. "And I'll swear it's nothing more than a reflection on me cha-rack-ter as an honest man."

"That's all right, Mike," replied Mr. Scou-ten good naturedly.

"It's all right, is it? It's a reflection on me cha-rack-ter as a police officer and me fawther

afore me," and Mr. Rafferty shook his fist at Mr. Scouten and sat down.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Mr. Scouten, "I take pleasure in presenting to you your fellow townsman and distinguished citizen, Nathaniel Whittleback."

"My friends," Mr. Whittleback began, when the applause of the lieutenants had subsided, "I wish I was an orator like Mr. Tubbmann, but I'm not. You know my mother was Dutch and I lay it to that." Laughter. "I've heard so much said against me lately that I hardly know what to think of this meeting, but I'll tell you right at the beginning that I've done no more than any citizen ought to be willing to do."

The lieutenants applauded, but the rest of the audience remained silent and critical.

Mr. Whittleback then told why he undertook the investigation, and gave a statement of what he had found.

"Now, my friends," he continued in a conversational tone, as though he were speaking to each one individually, "I'm a Republican and

some of you are Democrats, but we're all fellow townsmen, and when I see the men we have elected to office putting our money in their pockets and giving us no equivalent, I say it's wrong."

"You're right," came a voice from the audience.

"But I'm only one; it's what you say that goes."

"We're with you," came another voice.

"I'm not a politician," Mr. Whittleback continued, "I'm just a plain, ordinary man, but in the way I look at public office it's a contract between the people and the man they elect. You vote a man into office because he promises to serve you. Why shouldn't you have the privilege of voting him out of office right away when you find he's broken his contract and isn't serving you? Why should you be compelled to wait until his term is out? If you hire a man to work your farm and he doesn't suit, can't you discharge him if he breaks his contract?"

"Now you're talking sense," shouted a

weather-beaten old farmer from the interior of the county who had walked six miles to attend the meeting.

"I'm not a public speaker and I never held an office," Mr. Whittleback went on, "but I undertook this investigation and I've told you what I found and now I want to recommend some things that have occurred to me."

He then recommended several remedies to improve local conditions.

"And I also want to recommend that an ordinance be passed by the village board giving the voters of this village the right to vote any man out of office as soon as he doesn't do his duty, and that a Bill be introduced in the Legislature permitting the same thing to be done all over the State. And last of all I suggest that you citizens take more interest in your affairs from now on."

The lieutenants did not need to cheer then. Without any of the arts of the orator Mr. Whittleback had won the audience by his frankness and good sense. He might be plain, he might be radical, but he was honest. They cheered,

they waved their hats, the lieutenants shouted: "What's the matter with Whittleback?" And those on the platform answered: "He's all right," until everybody was hoarse.

Mr. Scouten came forward and was about to ask for a motion to adopt the report and recommendations, when from the rear of the hall a man who had just come in shouted: "I'd like to ask Whittleback what he's getting out of this?"

Then there were hisses and cries of, "He's a Democrat," and "Put him out," in the midst of which a young and enthusiastic Republican went up to the new-comer and inquired with a sneer: "You're a Democrat, aren't you?" "Yes," replied the man, in a voice that could be heard over the hall; "and what if I am?"

"That shows you're a fool," retorted the young Republican.

Everybody now expected a fight, and no one was disappointed.

"Mr. Rafferty," shouted Mr. Scouten, "you had better preserve order."

Mr. Rafferty had already started toward the

scene of hostilities. His method of ending a fight was peculiarly his own. "Make way!" he shouted. Everybody made way. Then when a clear space was opened up between himself and the combatants, he started forward and threw himself against them with all his might, much as a bowling ball is rolled against the pins, and with much the same effect, for Mr. Rafferty was so fat and the force of the impact was so great that he knocked both combatants off their feet and was soon bearing them away in triumph to the village jail.

This unfortunate occurrence seemed to break up the good feeling which had prevailed and to divide the audience on party lines; for a "dyed in the wool" Democrat arose and moved that Mr. Whittleback's report be adopted, and took advantage of the occasion to berate the Republican Party in general and the Republicans of Sky View in particular; a "Black" Republican replied by denouncing the Democrats in general and that Democrat in particular; Mr. Scouter rapped loudly to secure order, without success, when, in the midst of the growing

tumult, Mr. Tubbmann stepped to the edge of the platform and motioned the crowd to be silent. When quiet was partially restored, he began in his fine, rich voice which reached to the farthest corners of the room: "My friends, up through the ages the men of every clime have dreamed of being free. The patriots of every nation have fought and bled for freedom. Through the gloom of the centuries the hope of liberty has been the light which has beckoned men onward. Far away from the Old World, in a new land, where a great, brave people reared their homes out of the primeval wilderness, the dream at last was realized."

The hall was as still as death, and men, women and children leaned forward pale with emotion.

Need he tell them that America was that country and they that people? They too had fought to preserve what they had won. Many there were before him who had sent a soldier boy away never to return. That was patriotism. To be brave when the drums beat and

the battle raged was patriotism. But there was another patriotism, the patriotism of peace, which led a man to stand for what he believed was right, no matter what he suffered. He was the greater hero. There was such a man among them, who had spent weeks of his time in their behalf, who had come here to-night to tell them the result. That man was a hero. That man he would then and there place in nomination for President of Sky View at the coming election; that man's report and recommendations should be adopted by a rising vote, and he would so move, together with a vote of thanks, for that man was that splendid patriot and hero of peace — Nathaniel Whittleback!

CHAPTER VIII

MR. WHITTLEBACK had captured Sky View. Everybody was talking about him. He was pointed out to strangers as "our distinguished citizen." The newsboys took off their caps to him. *The Clarion* devoted the front page of its next issue to his picture and a sketch of his life and a history of his father's honorable career in county Politics. The Sewing Circle discussed him and praised his courage, but regretted that he was not a family man. The select coterie that played dominoes in the rear of the blacksmith shop had him as the topic of conversation. At the grocery stores the usual evening talk of horses and sports was abandoned for discussion of the public meeting and what Mr. Whittleback would do and whether he would fight "The Organization," for until then it was an unheard-of thing and against all known rules of Politics for a Republican to attack his own Party, but all agreed

he was a coming man, and that they hadn't thought he had it in him.

When it became known that he was to be nominated for village President, political leaders who lorded it over election districts came to confer with him. County politicians with a very important air volunteered to advise him. He was obliged to hear applicants for the village clerkship recite their qualifications. Candidates for the position of policeman beset him at all times of the day and night. His office, which had always been a quiet place, where business was carried on in an easy, matter-of-fact manner, as befitted an establishment of many years' standing, was now the scene of bustle and excitement, with people coming and going: Some came requesting passes on the railroad; others came requesting positions in the public service, and still others came to suggest their pet schemes for the promotion of the Public's welfare. Many came to make complaints. In fact, Mr. Whittleback was so popular and was so busy receiving petitioners and

advisers, and listening to congratulations and offers of assistance, that he had little time to eat or sleep.

One morning a stranger made his way through the crowd in the outer office and requested a private audience. To the trained eye he had all the earmarks of a sharper, but Mr. Whittleback shook hands with him and led him into his private room.

"You will pardon me, Mr. Whittleback," said the stranger, "but you are well known, and I want to make you better known. I am Mr. Hatwell of New York and I represent the *Portraiture Magazine*."

He handed Mr. Whittleback a card and continued: "We shall have the histories and photographs of several prominent men of the country in our March number and we want yours to be one of them."

"Well," said Mr. Whittleback, "I'll be blessed if I can imagine what will come next."

"It's a regular thing," said Mr. Hatwell. "Everybody does it and you can't become

famous without it. For instance, in the March number we shall have a new literary man, a popular preacher, a well-known politician and a reformer—yourself, Mr. Whittleback."

He said of course there was some expense in the matter, but the magazine had a circulation of over a million, and fifty dollars was a very small price to pay for an introduction to so many readers. That the scheme was a popular one was shown by the fact that no man to whom the proposition had been presented had turned it down.

This easy and cheap way of becoming famous so appealed to Mr. Whittleback, that he remarked: "I've never spent any money on this sort of thing and I suppose I might afford a little. It would be quite an advertisement for the campaign."

Encouraged by this remark, Mr. Hatwell began talking again, and before he had finished talking he had fifty dollars of Mr. Whittleback's money, and Mr. Whittleback had his receipt for the same, and after he had gone Mr. Whittle-

back hardly knew whether to be glad or sorry.

But it did seem that Fame, that fickle goddess, had chosen Mr. Whittleback for one of her own, and only asked him to do his part and leave the rest to her.

CHAPTER IX

M R. WHITTLEBACK did not understand why everybody should think he had gone into Politics simply because he was engaged in a fight for good government. To hold public office was not to his liking. He had consented to become a candidate for village President only for the sake of reforming the village government. After the enthusiastic reception accorded him at the public meeting he had supposed all would be easy sailing. Imagine his surprise, therefore, when Mr. Scouten told him he must begin to study figures.

"Figures!" exclaimed Mr. Whittleback.
"What figures?"

"Why, the figures showing the votes the candidates received at the last village election. We have a fight on our hands and you will have to be informed on local Politics so you can talk intelligently with the boys and make a good impression. Here are last year's figures. Sat-

terley's district gave the Republican candidate a majority of thirty. Satterley's going to run himself this year and he'll get more than that."

"What's Satterley going to run for?"

"For Trustee, and he has two important qualifications," replied Mr. Scouten, laughing. "He is a vote-getter, and he will take orders from The Organization, and both qualifications are important just now, for even if we carry the election, we will have only two Republican Trustees to two Democratic Trustees, but of course your election will give us a majority."

"Who is our other candidate?"

"Trusdall."

"I don't like him any better than Satterley," exclaimed Mr. Whittleback. "I don't see why the people want such men holding office."

"*They* don't want 'em, but The Organization wants 'em. When we want to put things through we want men who will do as they are told, and when you become President you want men who will be with you in what you undertake."

This sentiment struck Mr. Whittleback as

so reasonable that in spite of his personal dislike for his fellow candidates he consented to take up what Mr. Scouten called the preliminary work of the campaign. Every evening, in company with that untiring public servant, he visited those grocery stores which were strongholds of Republicanism, met the citizens who congregated there, talked and smoked with them, gave them the best hearty handshakes he could command, passed around the cigars with the munificence of a newly married man, laughed at their jokes, and compelled their admiration by his knowledge of the exact number of votes the Party polled in each election district at the last election. He even condescended so far as to accompany Mr. Scouten to Mr. Satterley's hotel, and talked and smoked with the members of the Republican Party who frequented that retreat. In short, he was so determined to succeed, and made such a good impression upon all sides, that Mr. Scouten congratulated him upon his progress and assured him that he was a true son of his father. Then Mr. Scouten would introduce him to another "good Re-

publican" and pat the "good Republican" on the back and tell Mr. Whittleback what a fine fellow he was, and inform the "good Republican" what a fortunate thing it was for the Party that they had discovered Mr. Whittleback, for he was proving himself to be a regular chip off the old block.

Thus did Mr. Whittleback spend his time until the convention came, and then — so well had Mr. Scouten managed things — there was not a dissenting voice, and Mr. Whittleback was unanimously nominated by the Republican Party as its candidate for President of Sky View.

"Now, Mr. Whittleback," said Mr. Scouten, "you must see The Organization."

CHAPTER X

THE Organization was a political committee composed of two members from each town in the county. It had absolute control of the affairs of the Republican Party in Poquogg County. It was represented in State affairs by its Chairman, Mr. Scouten, who was a member of the State Committee. Every man who received a political appointment in the county had first to secure the endorsement of The Organization. The money which the Republican State Committee allotted to Poquogg County in State elections was placed with The Organization and by it expended. If a man desired to receive the nomination for so small an office as constable, he must receive the consent of the committeemen who represented his town. After the Party in any section of the county made nominations, Mr. Scouten called The Organization together to have a private audience with the candidates. It was to an au-

dience with this august body that Mr. Whittleback, shortly after his nomination, received a summons.

He went to the Post Office on the evening appointed and found there his fellow candidates, Messrs. Satterley and Trusdall. The members of The Organization were seated around a large table, smoking and chatting. Mr. Scouten occupied a seat at the head of the table, and upon Mr. Whittleback's entrance bade him a hearty welcome and introduced him to his associates. After being introduced all around, Mr. Whittleback was given the seat of honor near the head of the table and one of the members passed a box of cigars. The Organization had evidently been occupied with various matters of business before Mr. Whittleback's arrival, for the table was covered with letters and maps and sample ballots and boxes of cigars, and at one end of the table were glasses and a decanter, which, judging from the smell, contained whiskey, and which, Mr. Whittleback soon learned, was much in demand by some of the company.

"Mr. Whittleback," said Mr. Harker, "you're the slickest thing yet. The way you got these people so quick with this idea of reforming your own Party commands my admiration. It's a new one all right."

Mr. Harker was the youngest man in The Organization, and represented the younger element in county Politics. He had wrested the leadership of one of the inland towns from its old time leader by changing the hour of a convention on some of the public notices and had thus carried through his own program. Coming into The Organization with such a recommendation for political ability, he was honored with the responsible position of Secretary. He was an energetic, business-like young man, and even had designs upon Mr. Scouten's position.

"Yes," remarked Mr. Windy, a big, red-faced, white-haired man, who held the record for years of service to the Party. "A man that's as slick as you, Whittleback, ought to be running for Congress instead of for President of a village," and Mr. Windy gave a long puff on his cigar and the smoke rolled up above his

red face in such volume that it gave the face the appearance of a miniature volcano in eruption.

"It's only a matter of time," suggested another member, making a visit to the decanter.

To these remarks and many others of similar character, together with suggestions and plans for the campaign, Mr. Whittleback made no reply, other than to nod his head occasionally and to continue smoking his cigar. To tell the truth, he was not so interested as he should have been, perhaps, in all this talk of methods and figures; so when he had finished his cigar and had given the members a chance to look him over, he said he was very glad to have met the gentlemen, and as he had had a busy day he guessed he would be going over to the Club.

"I think, Mr. Whittleback," suggested Mr. Harker, smiling, "that The Organization has a little business to transact with you before you go."

"You'll have to explain to him, Harker," remarked Mr. Windy in an undertone. "He's new at the game."

"I suppose you know, Mr. Whittleback,"

said Mr. Harker, "that you never could have been nominated if we had not endorsed you?"

"I know," Mr. Whittleback replied, "that Mr. Scouten, who said he represented you, asked me to run."

"Do you realize that we have also got to elect you?"

"No, I supposed the people would do that."

"That's where you made a mistake, Mr. Whittleback," Mr. Harker continued, and all the members vigorously shook their heads; "we not only nominated you, but we have got to elect you."

At a nod from Mr. Scouten, one of the members placed the decanter and a glass in front of Mr. Whittleback and asked him if he would not try a little of The Organization's whiskey.

"That's right," interposed Mr. Windy, the volcano again bursting into eruption. "Let's all have a little."

The success of every political campaign, continued Mr. Harker, after they had all drunk to the Party's success, depended upon The Or-

ganization which conducted it, and of course to conduct a campaign properly cost money. So it was the custom to assess candidates in proportion to the value of their offices. The office of President of Sky View, although one of honor, paid no salary and for that reason might not be considered so good an office as some others which The Organization would have at its disposal in the fall, but it was a good beginning.

"So we have fixed your assessment, Mr. Whittleback, at one hundred dollars."

Mr. Whittleback was so dumbfounded by this announcement that it was some time before he could recover his composure sufficiently to ask why more money was wanted of him, as he had already given Mr. Scouten a hundred dollars.

The Organization had not heard of that. The members turned to the Chairman and at last Mr. Harker asked Mr. Scouten if it was true.

Mr. Scouten said it was true, but that one hundred dollars was for preliminary expenses

which in no way concerned The Organization.

The members of The Organization thought it did concern them.

"Gentlemen," exclaimed Mr. Satterley, whose visits to the decanter had been frequent, "perhaps Mister Scouten's forgot to divide up. It's always gentlemanly, Mister Scouten, to divide up."

"Satterley, be silent," said Mr. Scouten, and Mr. Satterley and The Organization pursued the subject no further.

"Yes, Mr. Whittleback," Mr. Scouten continued, "Harker's right about this matter of campaigns. I've had more experience in Politics in the last twenty years than anyone here, with the exception of Mr. Windy, and I ought to know. In fact, it was here in Poquogg County that the practice of paying voters first began. That was when Wheedle was leader. You can't remember it, Harker, it was before your time, but Mr. Windy can?"

"You bet," said Mr. Windy.

"Of course, that was a good many years ago," Mr. Scouten continued, "but I can re-

member seeing him stand on the corner down here on election day with a box of cigars in one pocket and a roll of bills in the other and take the voters around the corner and fix 'em up. It wasn't very long before the practice began all over the country, so that you can't run a campaign now without money any more than a man can be nominated without The Organization's endorsement."

"Yes," interrupted Mr. Satterley, rising to his feet and steadyng himself by his chair, "that's right, Mr. Whittleback. And Mr. Wheedle, where do you suppose he is now? Why, he's in Congress!"

"Satterley, sit down!" shouted Mr. Scouten. And Mr. Satterley obeyed.

"Are the other candidates assessed?" inquired Mr. Whittleback.

"Yes, my friend," said the irrepressible Mr. Satterley. "Assessed to be sure. You can't get out of it, I can't get out of it, Trusdall here can't get out of it, and if there's any getting out of a thing like this Trusdall will get out of it."

"Yes," remarked Mr. Trusdall resignedly, "we're all in the same boat."

"And you can't do any better by going to the Democrats," Mr. Satterley continued. "They run their party the same way. Don't they, Boss?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Scouten gruffly. "Satterley, suppose you keep still for a while."

"Well, gentlemen," said Mr. Whittleback, "if this is what a man has got to do to be elected to office, my opinion is it costs more than it comes to, and I don't see how you get men to take your offices."

"Ah, Mr. Whittleback," interrupted Mr. Harker, "don't be too hasty. That might be true of other men, but not of you. You have a great future before you. Your scheme of voting crooked officials out of office will take. It's right. We'll stand back of you on it. It may be one of our best known political reforms. You've a big chance. You may not like some things in Politics, but you can never help the people by staying out of Politics. Now you've started, I say go on."

Was this young man who seemed so old in experience speaking truth? Could he do something for his fellow citizens of Sky View? It was more than he had bargained for, but The Organization could evidently defeat him if it wished, even though he had been nominated. If he were defeated for President now, his chances of serving the Public might end forever. If he was to be in a position to accomplish anything for the Public, he must make sacrifices. Now that he had begun, he might as well see it through. Impelled by these considerations, Mr. Whittleback at length expressed himself as willing to comply with The Organization's demand, that honorable body agreeing then and there, however, that it would stand back of him in reforming the village government, and that it would spend his money for none but legitimate expenses.

"You'll never lose anything by sticking to The Organization," Mr. Harker assured him. "We assume all responsibility for your election. You let us manage things and you'll see

when the votes are counted that your confidence in us has not been misplaced."

"I knew he'd come around all right," remarked Mr. Windy.

Then that veteran politician proposed a toast to, "The Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback, Sky View's next President," to which all responded heartily. As a further evidence of their good feeling, they invited him to go with them to Mr. Satterley's hotel, which was The Organization's headquarters in Sky View. This, however, Mr. Whittleback respectfully declined to do, as he had seen enough of The Organization for that evening and was glad to get back to the Club.

We have been so busy following Mr. Whittleback through the activities of the political world that we have had no time to give to The Home Club the place that it deserves in this history. But for this shelter to which he could repair we doubt if Mr. Whittleback could ever have stood the strain of political life. This was a very haven of refuge. Here no business

could be transacted. No petitioners for office ever crossed its threshold. What better relief from the worries of Politics than to sit down here to a quiet game of cards with President Costaine, or to listen to old Mr. Dusenbury give the history of his latest experiment in the cause of Science, or to sit within the shadow of the great blazing fire in the Hall and listen to "Hercules," steward and Major Domo of the place, sing a song or dance a jig?

Blessings on the Sky View Home Club for all it did for Mr. Whittleback in those troublous times. May its Hall fire burn for many generations, as long, indeed, as Sky View shall have a place in history, and may it always shelter members as worthy as he.

CHAPTER XI

OLD Mr. Withey, who had lost a leg in the war, and who kept a news stand near the Post Office, was awakened from one of his morning naps by the entrance of a man who seemed to be in a great hurry. The man snatched a magazine from the table and began to look at it eagerly. Then Mr. Withey recognized the man as Mr. Whittleback. It was the first day of the month and it was upon that day Mr. Hatwell had said the *Portraiture Magazine* was published and a million copies distributed in various parts of the United States. There it was, sure enough, the cover adorned with a fine portrait — but it was not Mr. Whittleback's portrait! Well, Mr. Whittleback did not expect it would be on the cover, so he glanced rapidly through the pages to see where it was. He did not see it anywhere. He then pulled a chair up to the table and, sitting down, went through the magazine again. He could

not find it. He looked at the cover. It was the *Portraiture Magazine*, there was no doubt about that, and it was to the *Portraiture Magazine* that he had paid fifty dollars to have published his picture and a sketch of his life. He went through the magazine page by page, but he could not see a sign of his picture anywhere, or a sketch of his life, or even his name. Then for the first time it occurred to him that he had been duped.

"Find what you want?" inquired Mr. Withey, whose curiosity had been aroused.

"No," replied Mr. Whittleback, "I'll be blessed if I can find anything I want. I guess they've left it out," he remarked, after he had gone through the magazine for the fourth time.

"Better be left out in there than be left out on election day," said Mr. Withey.

But this consolatory remark did not restore Mr. Whittleback's good humor, for he paced the floor a few moments and then exclaimed: "I'll be blessed if I don't teach him," and paying for the magazine he hastened away, and Mr. Withey hobbled to the window just in time

to see him going up the stairway that led to Mr. Tubbmann's law offices.

"Come in," said Mr. Tubbmann, in answer to Mr. Whittleback's knock.

Mr. Whittleback was so excited he forgot to say good morning, but thrust the magazine into Mr. Tubbman's hands and exclaimed: "See if you can find my picture or name in there."

"Be seated," said Mr. Tubbmann. Then putting on his spectacles with a flourish, he hastily scanned the magazine's pages and shook his head.

"That's what I thought," said Mr. Whittleback. "Well then, Mr. Tubbmann, I've been cheated and insulted, and I came to see what I can do about it."

"Put the law on 'em."

"Something ought to be done to teach such scoundrels a lesson. It's an outrage, Mr. Tubbmann."

"Why, Whittleback, a man in your position owes it to himself to uphold his dignity. You're in somewhat the same position as a mem-

ber of the Bar. I've been a member of the Bar for thirty years, and I've always tried to uphold the dignity of the Bar."

"What would you advise doing, Mr. Tubbmann?"

"Whittleback, I am a lawyer of thirty years' experience. I have the honor to be a personal friend of the Governor of the State and the President of the United States. I am also a member of the State Bar Association. It is one of the rules fixed by that Association that before a lawyer of my experience hears a case he must be paid a retaining fee."

"Do you mean that I must pay you money simply to state my case to you?"

"That, Whittleback, is one of the rules of the Bar Association, and it is not for me, so old a member of the Bar as I am, to compromise its dignity."

"The State Bar Association is pretty hard on the clients," replied Mr. Whittleback, who did not know for the life of him what the State Bar Association was, but dared not ask Mr. Tubbmann the question.

"That rule, Whittleback, was made for the oldest and most efficient members of the Bar, and was made for this reason: If you go to some upstart and state your case, he's got to get down a pile of books as high as your head and wade through 'em before he can give you an opinion, whereas, we experienced members of the Bar can tell you what to do without all that infernal nonsense."

"I don't know but that looks reasonable," said Mr. Whittleback. "What fee does the Bar Association fix?"

"The Bar Association fixes no absolute fee. It makes a recommendation. It recommends a retaining fee of one hundred dollars, but as we belong to the same Club and are likely to be associated politically in the future, I think I can conscientiously go below that without compromising my professional dignity. Make it fifty dollars."

Mr. Whittleback took out the fifty dollars and handed them to Mr. Tubbmann, who stuffed them into his vest pocket as though they were useless bits of paper.

"Now, Whittleback," he continued, leaning back in his chair and elevating his feet upon the table, "state your case."

Then Mr. Whittleback did state his case. He told what he had done and what Mr. Hatwell had agreed to do and what he had not done, and ended by requesting Mr. Tubbmann to secure him redress through the medium of the law.

"My advice to you, Whittleback, is to sue him. It's a duty you owe to yourself and the Party to uphold your dignity."

"All right, sue him, and sue him right away."

"Very well. Come around this afternoon and I'll have the papers ready for you to sign."

After Mr. Whittleback had gone, Mr. Tubbmann looked at the door and thus soliloquized: "He's like all the rest of 'em. They'll berate us lawyers up hill and down, but when they get in any trouble, then they come around."

CHAPTER XII

THE annual banquet of the Jacksonian Club of Plumville was the occasion of a great gathering of Democratic politicians, lawyers and local statesmen from all that section of the country. It was one of the rare occasions upon which Mr. Solomon Costaine left Sky View. He had long been a member of the Jacksonian Club, of which fact he was never tired of boasting. It was his custom to invite one of the members of The Sky View Home Club to accompany him on these excursions, and this year he invited Mr. Whittleback, partly for the purpose of showing that rising Republican "how we Democrats do things," and partly to honor himself by having such a distinguished man as his guest.

The Hawk Hotel, where the banquet was held, was a quaint old structure. In the days of the Revolution it was a Wayside Tavern, and Mine Host Drisk, the old proprietor, dis-

cussed with as much exactness the distinguished personages who enjoyed its hospitality in those days as though he had lived then himself.

When Mr. Whittleback and Mr. Costaine arrived late in the afternoon they found many of the out-of-town guests already there. Everybody was busy talking and smoking, exchanging political secrets and personal reminiscences, renewing old friendships and forming new ones. Mr. Costaine at once sought out Mr. Mart, the Club's President.

"Mart," he said, when they had at last found that gentleman surrounded by a crowd of admirers, "let me introduce you to my friend and distinguished fellow townsman, the Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback. I suppose you've heard of him."

"No, Costaine," replied Mr. Mart, giving Mr. Whittleback a hearty handshake, "can't say that I have. What is he, leader of your county, Costaine?"

"No," interposed Mr. Whittleback, "I'm a Reformer, sir."

"Yes, Mart," said Mr. Costaine, "and he's running for President of Sky View."

"Good," exclaimed Mr. Mart, slapping Mr. Whittleback on the back. "This is Democratic luck. One of our speakers is sick and I've been wondering what we'd do about it. I'll put you down for a speech."

"No you won't," protested Mr. Whittleback; "I didn't come to make a speech and I'm no speaker anyway."

"Can't get anywhere in Politics without it," remarked Mr. Mart, taking out paper and pencil and beginning to write. "It's part of the game."

Before Mr. Whittleback had a chance to protest again some new arrivals came up, and these were introduced to him, and they in turn introduced him to others, and there were so many people to meet and all had so much to talk about that before Mr. Whittleback or Mr. Costaine realized it the time had come for the dinner to begin, and they were pushed along with the crowd toward the dining room, where

they were seated at the speakers' table. Then Mr. Whittleback thought about the speech Mr. Mart had put him down for, and was on the point of proposing to Mr. Costaine that they depart at once, but Mr. Costaine seemed to be enjoying himself so much that he lacked the heart to do it.

It was one of those banquets which are still much in vogue in the cities and larger towns of our country, where the diners pay a good price per plate and demand the worth of their money. There were many courses, and as there was a long interval between the service of the courses the diners whiled away the time by smoking and drinking. The music of an orchestra added to the pleasure of the occasion, and the surroundings and atmosphere were such as would tempt a man to overrate his capacity for eating and drinking. The courses were so many and the champagne flowed so freely that there were times when Mr. Whittleback and Mr. Costaine wondered whether they would be able to keep their end up with the rest of the

guests. But at last the plates were removed for the last time, the cigars were passed, and it was time for the speechmaking to begin.

President Mart acted as toastmaster, and, after a few words of greeting, introduced the first speaker, The Hon. Jonathan Sleek, who had lately been elected to the Supreme Court. His subject was "The Judiciary," but as was his custom he began by displaying his knowledge of local history. He was glad to be in Plumville, a town with a history that antedated Revolutionary days and which was rich in historic associations. It was the home of his old friend and late lamented member of the Bar, the Hon. "Jack" Frost, famous throughout the State for his legal attainments. He was glad to see present his friend Justice Trim, who was doing so much to elevate the dignity of the lower courts. "Trim, I'm glad to see you," said the Hon. Mr. Sleek, smiling across the table at a little man who had attracted the attention of the out-of-town guests by his black gown. Justice Trim smiled at this public recognition and tried to blow away a smoke cloud that

obscured him from the audience. Now a Judge never wanted to forget who put him on the bench, Mr. Sleek continued. Some lawyers when they got on the bench forgot that they were once practicing lawyers themselves. Such actions did no credit to the Judiciary. He promised he would never be guilty of that, and the audience approved this sentiment with generous applause. If the Democratic Party was to accomplish anything it must have a Democratic Judiciary. The Judiciary had the final say on all laws. A Democratic Legislature could pass the best law on earth and a Republican Judiciary could declare it unconstitutional. Uphold a Democratic Legislature by putting Democratic judges on the bench. "Gentlemen," he exclaimed dramatically, "I'll tell you right now that any law passed by a Democratic Legislature is constitutional enough for me." (Tremendous applause.) He then proceeded to "take a round out" of those people who criticised the Judiciary. They were dangerous citizens. If the Judiciary was ever to accomplish anything its members must be free from criticism. The

Public must have implicit faith in its Judiciary. There was grave danger that criticism of the Judiciary might cause the Public to lose confidence in judges. He therefore favored the passage of laws which should forbid all criticism of judicial acts by private citizens on the ground that it was against public policy. The preposterousness of a judge being criticised by a layman! Seeing that this was not a popular doctrine with the audience, the honorable gentleman proceeded to discuss the latest decisions on the difficult question of whether a man who would be guilty of larceny as an individual would be guilty of larceny if the theft were committed as the officer of a corporation. Said decisions held he would not be. The Judge endeavored to show the logic of these decisions, and to defend them, in which, however, he met with indifferent success, and closed his address with an eloquent protest against the modern tendency to make "new law."

The Hon. Horace Drastimus, the "silver tongued orator" of local Democracy, lived up to his reputation. He caught the audience at

once. He was a Democrat and he was proud of it. His father was a Democrat and his grandfather and all the way back. He never had any use for a Republican and he never would. (Applause.) The Republican Party was the Party of the rich men. If the people didn't know it, they ought to know it, for it was so. (More applause.) If there ever was any good in the Republicans they had lost it all. Look at their platforms. Did the gentlemen present want to know what a Republican platform was? Something to get into office on. That was all. (Laughter and applause.) And then the people had to pay the bills. All the time increasing expenses. Why should it cost so much more to run the government now than when he was a boy? Republican extravagance. The Republicans claimed to be anxious to help the people. Then why not let foreign products come in the country untaxed so the people could buy things cheap? (Applause and cries of "Hear, hear.") He would tell them why: To make a few men rich at the expense of the many. Look how rich men had

increased under Republican administrations. Put the Democratic Party in power; send a Democratic Governor to the Capital and a Democratic President to the White House; restore the rule of the people by electing a Democratic Congress, and the grand old Party of Jefferson and Jackson would never prove recreant to the trust and the country would attain to an era of prosperity it had never witnessed in all its history. (Tremendous applause.)

The Hon. John Sharp, who had become rich by robbing a neighboring city, delivered a very eloquent discourse on the benefits and needs of Honesty in all departments of life's activities, but especially in political life.

Then a banker read figures and statistics to inform the audience on modern banking methods, but was so elaborate in his explanations that everybody lost all interest in the subject and heartily wished he were through.

The last speaker of the evening, the toastmaster announced, was not on the program, but he had kindly consented to take the place of the gentleman who was absent; he was the

Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback, of Sky View, who had honored the banquet by his presence and would now favor the audience with a speech.

The Hon. Mr. Whittleback was in no condition to make a speech. This was his first public dinner and it had been too much for him. Mr. Costaine had been so busy enjoying himself that he had neglected to look after his distinguished guest, and he was soon to have cause to regret it bitterly.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Whittleback, rising with considerable difficulty, and making an elaborate bow to the toastmaster and the invited guests, "I suppose there are a good many of you here yet, but I can't see you. This room looks like the river at Sky View on a foggy morning." Laughter and applause. There was evidently going to be nothing dry about this speech. "Let me tell you Democrats something," Mr. Whittleback continued, apparently angered by the laughter, for he shook his fist at the diners: "These political Parties are humbugs! What have you politicians ever

done? You're always considering what will help your Party. You're afraid to take up any question, no matter how much it should be taken up, for fear it may hurt your Party and lose you votes. You were afraid to touch the slavery question. You're afraid to touch the liquor question. Why don't you think less about the votes and more about the people and what will benefit them? Why don't you lead instead of being led —?"

How far Mr. Whittleback would have gone in this indictment of politicians if he had not been interrupted it is impossible to say, for hisses and groans and loud laughter greeted these sentiments.

"You don't like it, do you?" he exclaimed. "Remember this: The Public needs a Reformer wherever there's a politician!"

Hisses and cries of, "He's no Democrat, he's a Republican," were heard on all sides, and those near Mr. Whittleback motioned him to be seated.

"Mr. Chairman!" shouted a man from the rear of the room, for Mr. Whittleback was not

the only one whom the champagne had affected. "What is this, a eulogy or an elegy?" and the audience shouted itself hoarse.

"You gentlemen have been proposing toasts this evening," Mr. Whittleback continued, when quiet had been partially restored; "I'll propose one: To the ex-tir-pa-tion of the politi-cians!"

A most unfortunate toast to propose in such a presence. There were hisses and roars of laughter mingled with cries of, "Put him out." Indeed, two or three of the younger members of the company started toward the speakers' table with the avowed intention of doing this very thing, but were grabbed and forcibly restrained by the older members of the Club. Toastmaster Mart endeavored to quiet the demonstration and to restore order, but was unsuccessful. It was fortunate that there were no more speakers, for the dinner ended then and there in an uproar. To think that any man should have dared to express such sentiments at a Democratic gathering!

Mr. Costaine was so chagrined at the turn

events had taken that he put Mr. Whittleback in charge of a porter, with instructions to take him to his room at once, while he devoted his energies to arranging matters satisfactorily with the newspaper reporters.

"Not much Democratic luck in putting him on the program," remarked Toastmaster Mart. He was not less chagrined than Mr. Costaine, and he was to have more cause for regret as time went on, for to the day of his death he never lived down the disgrace of having put a Republican on a Democratic program.

Whether Mr. Whittleback was impelled to make these derogatory allusions to politicians because of his dislike of the company in which he found himself, or because of his experiences with the politicians of Sky View, will always remain a matter of speculation to the students of his life, and one of the mysteries of our political history. He himself could throw no light upon the subject, as he was never able to recall with any distinctness the occurrences of that eventful evening. However, when the porter in whose care Mr. Costaine had placed

him was ready to leave him for the night, Mr. Whittleback grasped him warmly by the hand, beamed on him with a bland smile and declared he was delighted to see him and would do anything for him it was in his power to do. When the astonished porter had freed himself and left the room, he paused at the door for a moment and heard Mr. Whittleback exclaiming: " Didn't I do it well, Mr. Scouten? Didn't I do it almost as well as you could? " All of which was very unintelligible to the porter, but may be of interest to the readers of this history.

CHAPTER XIII

THERE is no telling how late Mr. Whittleback would have slept the next morning if the sun, that ruthless destroyer of morning slumbers, had not wakened Mr. Costaine, who hastened to the room of his distinguished friend to inquire after his health. As soon as Mr. Whittleback was awakened he became aware that all was not well inside his head. An invisible something was going backward and forward at a very furious pace and the head seemed to have increased greatly in size during the night. However, there was nothing to do but get up and eat breakfast and take the morning train for Sky View. They had finished breakfast and were in the office exchanging greetings with a few of the guests of the preceding evening, when Mr. Whittleback's attention was attracted by a stranger who was looking at him and apparently laughing at him. Mr. Whittleback finally recollected him as Mr.

Hatwell, the miscreant who by false pretenses had got from him fifty dollars. As soon as he did recognize Mr. Hatwell, Mr. Whittleback called out in a loud voice: "Mr. Costaine, I'll be blessed if there isn't that scoundrel who got fifty dollars out of me."

"What does this mean?" inquired Mine Host Drisk, hurriedly coming forward.

"It means that man there is a sharper. Look at him!"

There was Mr. Hatwell, leaning against the railing, smoking a cigarette and laughing. If he had not thus mocked Mr. Whittleback, it is possible all would have passed off without further ado, but an honorable man can stand so much and no more.

"I demand, sir," said Mr. Whittleback, starting toward Mr. Hatwell, "that you apologize immediately and return my fifty dollars."

Mr. Hatwell's reply was to strike Mr. Whittleback so violently that had it not been for Mr. Costaine's timely support he would have fallen to the floor. Fortunately, he was only stunned

for an instant and soon recovered his equilibrium.

By this time a crowd had collected, which now formed a ring about the combatants and looked forward with eagerness to a renewal of the conflict. That it would have been renewed there can be no doubt, for Mr. Whittleback's anger was thoroughly aroused and he was determined to teach Mr. Hatwell a lesson that he would remember to his dying day. But before he had had time to arrange his plan of attack a noise was heard in the rear and cries of, "The Cop!" "The Cop!" came from all sides.

"Make way, make way!" shouted the newcomer, who was no less a personage than Policeman Dunagan of the Plumville Police. "What's the matter wid ye?" he demanded, seizing Mr. Whittleback with one of his brawny hands. "Fightin', be ye, in a publick place? We'll attend to ye. Ye're under arrest."

It was Mr. Dunagan's rule always to arrest

the first man he saw, and Mr. Whittleback had been the unfortunate one upon this occasion.

"Who are you?" angrily demanded Mr. Whittleback.

"Who be I? Who do you suppose I be but an officer of the Law whose duty 'tis to uphold the Law. Come along."

"Where's your uniform?" inquired Mr. Costaine, who was struggling hard to keep his place near Mr. Whittleback.

"Who be ye to be askin' such questions of an officer of the Law? Is a man any less an officer without his uniform, I'd like to know?"

"Officer," interposed Mr. Hatwell, "I demand that you arrest this man immediately."

"He's under arrest now. Come along with you," giving Mr. Whittleback another vigorous pull.

"Sir," exclaimed that gentleman, "I'll be blessed if you aren't making a mistake, that's the man, sir, that sharper there."

"Ah, none of your swearin' to an officer of the Law, come along with ye till I take ye over to

Justice Trim," and before Mr. Whittleback or Mr. Costaine could offer another word of protest, Mr. Dunagan led his prisoner out of the hotel and down the street toward Justice Trim's Court Room, followed by Mr. Costaine, Mr. Hatwell, and the crowd, which grew larger as they passed along.

When they arrived at the Court Room the judge was not there. Although only a Justice of the Peace, Justice Trim was a martinet on all questions relating to the majesty of the Law, and would never open his court a moment earlier than the Supreme Court was opened. At last, after the interested parties had waited nearly half an hour, the door of the Justice's private office was opened, and Justice Trim emerged, clad in his black gown, and ascended the bench. A constable made solemn proclamation, bidding all persons who had any business to do with the Honorable Court of Special Sessions to draw near and give their attention and they should be heard. Then The Court asked Officer Dunagan whom he had.

"Your Honor," replied Mr. Dunagan,—

"Ah, I beg your pardon, the Most Honorable Court of Special Sessions, I've got a man here as was guilty of fightin' in a publick place."

Justice Trim nodded and took a chew of tobacco.

"The prisoner will stand up."

Mr. Whittleback stood up.

"Sir, you are charged with the crime of being disorderly; how do you plead, guilty or not guilty?"

"I'll be blessed if I know what you mean," replied Mr. Whittleback, who was entirely unfamiliar with court procedure.

"No swearing in this Court, sir, sit down."

Mr. Whittleback sat down in confusion.

"Are you the complainant?" Justice Trim inquired of Mr. Hatwell.

"Yes, Your Honor."

"You will please address this Court as The Most Honorable Court of Special Sessions."

Mr. Hatwell bowed.

"State your complaint."

Then Mr. Hatwell stated to The Most Honorable Court of Special Sessions that Mr. Whit-

tleback had made an assault upon him in the Hawk Hotel and had struck him and for this assault had been arrested.

"I'll be blessed," interrupted Mr. Whittleback, "if this isn't the worst outrage I ever heard of."

"Be quiet," shouted Justice Trim, pounding the desk with his gavel. "Officer, do you corroborate this man's story?"

"Yes, Your Honor — beg pardon, The Most Honorable Court of Special Sessions."

"Now, sir," said Justice Trim, turning to Mr. Whittleback, "stand up and answer only what I ask you. You have heard what these men have said?"

"Yes."

"Is it true?"

Mr. Whittleback replied he would be blessed if it was.

Justice Trim struck the desk violently with his gavel.

"Sir, if I hear any more of that kind of talk from you I will commit you immediately. I

have a great mind to commit you now as it is for contempt of court."

"Judge," interposed Mr. Costaine, coming to Mr. Whittleback's relief, "this is the Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback of Sky View. He isn't the guilty party. The officer got the wrong man."

"Sit down!" exclaimed Justice Trim fiercely. "Don't you dare to address this Court without permission. Now, sir," he continued, turning to Mr. Whittleback, who expected to be locked up at any minute, "you are charged with a very serious crime against the Law of the land. You have pleaded not guilty. I must give you a trial. The Law says you are entitled to counsel. Have you any counsel?"

Mr. Whittleback replied he did not have counsel there but he had a lawyer at home.

Justice Trim again struck the desk violently with his gavel.

"You must understand once and for all that you are to address the Court every time you open your mouth. I will not tell you this again."

Mr. Whittleback, who could not understand what he had done to provoke the Court's anger, wanted to apologize but did not dare to make another remark.

"The Law says you are entitled to Counsel," Justice Trim continued, "and that you are to be given an adjournment for that purpose. Now do you want counsel?"

"Yes, Your Honorable Court."

"I will give you what I have to give you and no more, for your conduct is very reprehensible. We will take an adjournment until two o'clock, and if your counsel is not here by that time I will assign counsel and proceed with the trial. Officer, remove the prisoner."

CHAPTER XIV

PRECISELY at two o'clock Justice Trim again assumed his official robe, and ordering his constable to announce him, issued forth from his private room and ascended the bench with all the pomp attendant upon the opening of the Supreme Court.

Since the morning recess the news had spread through the village like wildfire that a very celebrated stranger was on trial. It had created great excitement. Merchants left their stores to attend Court, and inquisitive matrons hurried through their dinners to see the famous criminal, for in some parts of town Mr. Whittleback was represented as a notorious criminal who had committed numerous depredations in various cities and was to be defended by distinguished counsel from out of town. School boys played truant to see the fun, and old men who had not been out of the house for weeks exposed themselves to the severe winter weather

in order to be present. The result was that the Court Room was crowded, and Justice Trim saw a favorable opportunity for impressing this mass of humanity with the majesty of the Law.

In a few minutes Officer Dunagan again brought Mr. Whittleback before the court. Great was the general surprise and disappointment when the audience saw, instead of a hardened criminal, a very respectable looking man, very ill at ease, however, and embarrassed beyond expression at the humiliating position in which he found himself.

Justice Trim struck the desk a violent blow with his gavel and inquired if Mr. Whittleback's counsel was present.

"No, your Most Honorable Court of Special Sessions," replied Mr. Dunagan, now resplendent in a blue uniform with brass buttons, "but he's sent to his counsel for to come and he'll be here shortly."

Then a murmur ran through the crowd, as Mr. Tubbmann slowly made his way through the Court Room and at last stood before the bench. Mr. Tubbmann bowed slightly to

Justice Trim, and slowly removing his great coat, turned and surveyed the audience. He enjoyed an audience.

"Your Honor," he at length began, raising his right hand to a level with his head and then rapidly drawing it across his mouth, "I have just arrived and I would like a few minutes to confer with my client."

"Counselor, I will give you no time at all. I also choose to be addressed as The Most Honorable Court of Special Sessions."

"The Most Honorable Court of Special Sessions," said Mr. Tubbmann in a sarcastic tone, "I would move for an adjournment for one week."

"No adjournment will be granted, Counselor. The trial will be continued immediately."

While this colloquy had been in progress another figure had made its way through the crowd and now approached the bench.

"Counselor," said Justice Trim, turning to Mr. Tubbmann, "this is Mr. Blother who will represent the People: Mr. Blother, the counsel for the defendant."

Mr. Tubbman condescended to nod.

"They had to go out of town to get a lawyer to defend this case," remarked Mr. Blother by way of parenthesis. He was a little man with a freckled face and a thick head of black hair which was parted in the middle.

"Will The Most Honorable Court of Special Sessions allow me to see the complaint against my client?" inquired Mr. Tubbmann.

Justice Trim handed Mr. Tubbmann the complaint.

"I move to dismiss this complaint," Mr. Tubbmann continued, after looking it over hastily, "first, on the ground that the place of residence of the complaining witness is not given; second, on the ground that it charges the defendant with assault in the first degree, a crime which this Court has no jurisdiction to try; and third, on the ground that the arrest was not made by an officer in uniform."

"Counselor," said Justice Trim, after some moments of deliberation, "your last ground is the only one with any merit. You may discuss that."

Although it had no merit from a legal standpoint, Mr. Tubbmann delivered a lengthy argument in support of it, to which Mr. Blother replied with much vehemence, in the midst of which Justice Trim turned to Policeman Dunagan and wanted to know why he should be seen upon the street without his uniform any more than he, Justice Trim, should ascend the bench without his gown, and declared that Mr. Dunagan had been associated with the Court long enough to know that his first duty was to uphold the majesty of the Law.

"But nevertheless, Counselor," he continued, turning to Mr. Tubbmann, "I will deny your motion. Mr. Blother, you may proceed with your case."

Mr. Blother then began to open his case to the Most Honorable Court of Special Sessions, and did so by starting off on a wild gallop of words against Mr. Whittleback, declaring that he was a man dangerous to the community, and should be lodged in a secure place where he would not be able to attack peaceful citizens in the enjoyment of their rights.

"The trouble with that man," remarked Mr. Tubbmann, addressing the audience, "is that he can't keep his tongue from running away with him."

The audience applauded, and Justice Trim pounded the desk with his gavel and threatened to clear the room. But Mr. Blother was so confused that he cut short his opening abruptly and called as his first witness Mr. Hatwell.

"Your Honor," interposed Mr. Tubbmann, "we demand a trial by jury."

"You have waived your right to a jury trial, Counselor, by proceeding thus far before the Court. Proceed, Mr. Blother."

Mr. Tubbmann took an exception and Mr. Blother endeavored to proceed, but his progress was not rapid because of the objections which Mr. Tubbmann made to almost every question he asked. Wearied by these interruptions, he appealed to the Court for relief.

"What is the meaning of all this, Counselor?" inquired Justice Trim angrily.

"It means that he will have a hard matter to prove his case. I once won a very important

case, sir, against the present Attorney General of the State by just such a procedure as this."

The audience leaned forward and took a greater interest in Mr. Tubbmann than ever.

Mr. Blother, who had been struggling to keep his tongue from going off upon another gallop of words, now gave up the struggle and the tongue addressed the Court with great vehemence on the justice of the Law.

"Whittleback," said Mr. Tubbmann to his astonished client, when the tongue had at last been brought to a halt by the aid of Justice Trim's gavel, "he's one of those upstarts I told you about."

Mr. Blother was so disconcerted by these tactics of his adversary, that, after proving a *prima facie* case of assault against Mr. Whittleback, he concluded his examination of the witness abruptly and turned him over to Mr. Tubbmann for cross-examination.

Mr. Tubbmann started in to make Mr. Hatwell unpopular with the audience, and he succeeded beyond his fondest expectations. Before he had gone far with his cross-examination

the audience was informed from the witness's own lips that he was a professional gambler, a convicted thief, and that he had struck Mr. Whittleback in the Hawk Hotel that morning, but he insisted that Mr. Whittleback had struck him first. That he was the man who had obtained fifty dollars from Mr. Whittleback as the alleged representative of the *Portraiture Magazine* he vigorously denied.

One secret of Mr. Tubbmann's popularity with the audience was the fact that he constantly gave it something new. Before finishing his cross-examination he stopped and asked permission to tell a story. Justice Trim answered by striking the desk violently with his gavel and declaring with emphasis that Mr. Tubbmann could not be aware of the great dignity of the Court in which the case was on trial.

"Sir," replied Mr. Tubbmann, raising his right hand to a level with his head and drawing it rapidly across his mouth, "I am a lawyer of thirty years' experience at the Bar, I have practiced before some of the most distinguished judges in the country, but I have never seen a

Court whose dignity there was less danger of lowering."

The audience chuckled with glee, but before Justice Trim had time to see the irony of the remark, Mr. Tubbmann straightened himself up to his full height and exclaimed dramatically:

"The Most Honorable Court of Special Sessions."

Everybody leaned forward eagerly to hear what was coming next.

"I move that you immediately commit this complainant to the county jail to await the action of the Grand Jury."

The interested parties were so nonplussed by this latest move that it was some moments before Justice Trim could find words to inquire:

"On what ground, Counselor?"

"He has committed perjury."

"In what part of his testimony?"

"He has testified here under oath that he struck this defendant. In his verified complaint he swore that he neither provoked the assault nor at any time struck the defendant. He has

therefore sworn falsely to a material fact, which, as the Court knows, is perjury."

In Justice Trim's opinion this motion raised a very important legal question, upon which he condescended to ask the counsel to enlighten him by argument.

"I think it is too plain to need any argument," said Mr. Tubbmann.

"Very well," said Justice Trim in high dudgeon. "Mr. Blother, have you anything to say?"

Mr. Blother, like his client, had begun to feel more and more uncomfortable, but, thus bidden, he replied that this was the most ridiculous motion he had ever heard. There were decisions of the highest courts which held that false swearing was not always perjury. This was one of those cases. He said he would cite some of them, but forgot to do so, and again addressed the Court on the justice of the Law.

"Counselor," shouted Justice Trim, checking the tongue when in full career by the vigorous use of his gavel, "the Court has been sufficiently enlightened. I will deny the motion."

As the trial had already consumed nearly three hours and as there seemed little prospect of concluding it that day, Mr. Tubbmann now renewed his application for an adjournment. "I have an appointment with the President of the United States the day after to-morrow," he said, "and I must leave for Washington to-morrow morning."

"No adjournment will be granted, Counselor," replied Justice Trim. "This case will be finished if it takes all night."

"Very well," said Mr. Tubbmann. "We will waive further examination and give bail to appear before the Grand Jury. I think this whole matter will bear investigation by that body."

This proceeding did not please Mr. Bloter, for he held a hasty conference with his client, and then announced:

"In view of my client's pressing business engagements, he will withdraw his complaint and consent that the defendant be discharged."

"Very well," said Justice Trim with relief. "The complaint is withdrawn and the defendant is discharged. Mr. Whittleback, you may go."

"Not just yet," interposed Mr. Tubbmann, turning to his client. "Now, sir," he continued, addressing Justice Trim, "I renew my motion to have this complainant held to await the action of the Grand Jury. I shall also take proper proceedings in the civil courts to redress my client for his false imprisonment."

This motion and threat of civil procedure gave much concern to Mr. Bloter and the Court, and evidently had a most disturbing effect upon Mr. Hatwell, for he now came over to Mr. Tubbmann and inquired in a whisper how much he would take to settle.

"How much will we take to settle?" repeated Mr. Tubbmann aloud. "This matter is in the hands of the Court, but you got fifty dollars out of my client on a lie and I have already begun suit against you to collect it. I will serve you with the complaint in that action now," and he handed Mr. Hatwell the complaint. "You can settle that case by the payment of that fifty dollars and the fifty dollars my client has paid me to collect it. If you will now publicly apologize to my client for the

occurrences of this morning I will advise him, with the Court's consent, to let the matter end here."

Mr. Hatwell, whose business engagements seemed to become more urgent as his fear of Mr. Tubbmann increased, now apologized profusely to Mr. Whittleback for the annoyance he had caused him and hoped he would be a good sport and be friends.

"We receive the apology whence it comes," said Mr. Tubbmann, after a conference with his delighted client. "Now I am prepared to receive one hundred dollars from you for which I will give you a discontinuance of the case of Whittleback vs. Hatwell. There is the receipt you gave Mr. Whittleback for his fifty dollars," he continued, laying it down upon the table. "I brought these papers along," he remarked in a parenthesis to the audience, "when I heard whom we were up against."

It was evident Mr. Hatwell did not like to pay the one hundred dollars. Instead of paying, he asked the Court if there was any further need for his presence.

"There is a motion before the Court," sternly replied Justice Trim, whose views of the case had changed materially in the last few minutes. "That motion I am considering. I have not heard it withdrawn."

"What is it?" asked Mr. Hatwell.

"You will address the Court, sir!" exclaimed Justice Trim, striking the desk violently with his gavel.

"The Most Honorable Court of Special Sessions," said Mr. Hatwell humbly. "May I inquire what is the motion?"

"That you be held to await the action of the Grand Jury."

"On what ground?"

"That you have committed perjury here."

"Give me a discontinuance of your action," said Mr. Hatwell, turning abruptly to Mr. Tubbmann. "Here is your money."

So saying he handed Mr. Tubbmann one hundred dollars.

"Now, Your Honor," said Mr. Tubbmann, after he had signed a discontinuance and handed it to Mr. Hatwell, "with the Court's permis-

sion we withdraw our motion, although I think this case should be presented to the Grand Jury on general principles."

"Perhaps," remarked Justice Trim. "But remember, gentlemen, this is a court of justice. The motion is withdrawn. The Court is adjourned."

CHAPTER XV

THE campaign in Sky View was on in earnest. The Democrats were not going to let the Republicans win if they could help it. They nominated candidates for President and village Trustees. Mr. Whittleback expected the Democrats would indorse him, but Mr. Scouten declared this impossible, for even though Mr. Whittleback was conceded to be an honest man, still he was a Republican and the Democrats must maintain their Party. The Democratic County Organization opened up headquarters in the village, levied contributions from its candidates, and began what was called a campaign of education, by public meetings, press advertisements, circulars and personal letters. The Republicans admitted there had been wholesale corruption in their Party and in the village government. Were the people going to put the Republicans in office again? Mr. Whittleback was a good man, but he was

in bad company. He had been nominated as a last hope of saving the ticket. The Republican candidates for Trustees were Organization men. Did the people imagine that any but Organization men would be appointed to office under a Republican administration? The only safe thing to do was to get the Republicans out of village affairs altogether by electing the Democratic ticket.

Mr. Whittleback was now to see the advantage of having the support of the Republican Organization, said Mr. Scouten. That honorable body threw itself into the conflict with all the ardor that came from long experience in political campaigns. It opened up headquarters in Mr. Satterley's hotel; there were free lunches and free cigars and an open bottle for all who chose to come, and Mr. Windy, as Chairman of the Entertainment Committee, made things so pleasant and attractive that many citizens did come. Mr. Harker took charge of the publicity bureau and "opened up" on the Democrats in no uncertain manner. What guarantee had the people that the Demo-

crats would do any better at running the village government of Sky View than they had done in Gilead, where in one year under Democratic administration taxes had been increased twenty-five per cent as a result of mismanagement and dishonesty? The difference between the Republicans and the Democrats was that the Republicans admitted their mistakes but the Democrats did not have sense enough to do so. The Republicans were pledged to do certain definite things. Who could ever tell what the Democrats would do? They were likely to do anything. Under the last Democratic administration in Sky View the tax rate had increased and not a public improvement had been made. Had the Democrats forgotten that? Very likely. But the voters would not forget it on election day. Did the people want a pledge of Republican sincerity? Their candidate stood pledged to the passage of an ordinance giving the people the right to vote out of office any office holder who did not do his duty. What better protection did the Public want?

So the conflict began. The Republicans contradicted the statements of the Democrats, and the Democrats laughed at the statements of the Republicans. The Republican Organization of the State was the most tyrannical political organization in the country and the Poquogg County Republican Organization was a part of it. The Democratic Organization of the State was the most corrupt political Organization in the world, and the Democratic Organization in Poquogg County was under its control. Who started the practice of buying votes in the county? The Republicans: Would they deny that? The only reason the Democrats did not buy votes was that they had no money. The Democratic candidates were honest men. Did anybody question the integrity of Nathaniel Whittleback, who was the son of the county's most honored citizen and a chip off the old block? The pictures of the rival candidates adorned the windows of every store. Trees and fences were decorated with them and with injunctions to the voters to remember

the candidates at the polls. Every citizen was written to and interviewed.

After this had gone on a week or more it was not surprising that Mr. Scouten's lieutenants reported to their chief that the people were at last thoroughly aroused to the fact that a vigorous conflict was being carried on by the rival Parties to win their votes, and that the campaign had awakened more interest than any other campaign of recent years.

Mr. Whittleback was made aware of the Public's interest in no uncertain manner. He was kept busy from morning till night receiving applicants for positions; answering letters containing congratulations and advice, requests for passes on the railroad, free theater tickets and financial assistance. A delegation from a local Association of working men demanded that he pledge himself to increase the rate of wages and lessen the hours of labor, or the Association would not support him at the polls. The local Liquor Dealers' Association, aroused by the unusual political activity, demanded to know his attitude on the liquor question. A

man whose house was mortgaged wrote him that the mortgage was about to be foreclosed, and asked that he do something to prevent such a catastrophe, adding by way of inducement that the writer controlled three votes beside his own. A delegation of women representing the local officers of the National Anti-Epicurean League called upon him and asked about his attitude on the temperance question, and demanded that he pledge himself against the sale of liquor in Sky View and the country generally. Mr. Whittleback listened to the demands of the delegation with great deference and patience, and then replied that he would be blessed if he would not do anything in his power to aid the cause of humanity and good government. After again stating their views, and giving Mr. Whittleback some sage advice, the delegation departed, its members in doubt as to what sort of a man he was, but firmly convinced that in making their visit they had performed a very necessary duty.

Mr. Tubbmann condescended to make but one suggestion in regard to the campaign:

That it be closed with a flourish. Mr. Scouten and The Organization adopted the suggestion, and the result was that the doings upon the day before election surpassed anything the citizens of the village had ever before witnessed. A general holiday was proclaimed and everybody was invited to take part in a grand demonstration in honor of Mr. Whittleback, "Our distinguished fellow townsman, the friend of liberty and representative government." There was a parade of the school children, there were banners and flags, there was music by the village band, there were speeches by Mr. Tubbmann and Mr. Scouten, and, best of all, there was a banquet, to which everybody was invited, served in the Town Hall. All day long Mr. Whittleback was busy meeting voters and voters' wives and voters' children, and giving hearty handshakes and bland smiles, and making nice speeches. Just to have the pleasure of meeting such a fine lot of people was worth all the trouble of running for office. The best people in the world were in Sky View, and the children — how healthy they were, and how

bright in their studies. Mr. Whittleback had heard good reports of them. The children spoke well for their parents, their mothers especially. It was too bad the mothers could not vote, declared Mr. Scouten, for it would be a shame to have a man like Mr. Whittleback defeated. How democratic he was. There was nothing stuck-up about him. He was one of the people and as honest as the day was long.

When, at last, the day was over, Mr. Whittleback supposed his labors for the campaign were ended, but Mr. Scouten said he must be around when the polls opened. Mr. Whittleback, therefore, was up bright and early the next morning and went with Mr. Scouten to Mr. Satterley's hotel, where he exhibited himself to the early voters on their way to the polls. Mr. Scouten held a private audience with his lieutenants, gave each a roll of bills and a box of cigars, fixed the maximum price which was to be paid for a vote, and bade them go to their respective election districts.

It was a day of hard work for the lieuten-

ants, for it was their business to "bring out the vote." Those who did not vote early were sent for. There were carriages for the old and infirm. There were arguments for those who yet needed to be convinced. There were cigars for everybody; and there were private interviews with those citizens who needed more substantial inducements than Party loyalty to vote the Party ticket. Both sides were active; both were well organized; both kept up the fight until the polls closed. At last that happy hour arrived, the votes were counted, and Mr. Whittleback was found elected President of Sky View by the largest majority ever before given any candidate for President in the village's history.

When this news was brought to the Post Office Mr. Scouten gave Mr. Whittleback his heartiest handshake and congratulated him upon his victory. The members of The Organization came in and offered their congratulations and reminded him of their promise to elect him; it had been a hard fight, but they had won and the country had been saved. The

lieutenants hastily secured the services of the village band, gathered a great crowd of enthusiastic partisans, marched to the Post Office, brought Mr. Whittleback forth, and placing him upon the shoulders of four husky admirers, the whole throng marched up Main Street, shouting and singing, and hailing Mr. Whittleback as a conquering hero, who had triumphed over the enemies of the people and given the Democrats the worst beating they ever had.

Mr. Whittleback's triumph and the triumph of his Party was complete. The Democrats were completely routed. The celebration festivities were carried on until midnight, but no Democrat was abroad, and no man who appeared upon the streets that night would admit he was not a Republican or that he had ever been or would ever be a member of any other than the Republican Party.

It had been a hard campaign for Mr. Whittleback, for he was unused to the exactions of political conflict. But as the Alpine climber, toiling for many days up the steep ascents, at

last reaches the coveted summit and there forgets the hardships of the journey in the pleasure of the victory, so Mr. Whittleback forgot the difficulties of his political journey in the joy of being the official representative of the people and an "Hon." as well. For thenceforth, when mentioned in the press or when addressed officially, he was "The Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback," but by the people he was always called "Nat Whittleback."

CHAPTER XVI

“**W**ILL the Board of Trustees come to order.”

It was Mr. Whittleback's first official utterance since his election. He and his associates had taken their oaths of office and were now to hold their first meeting.

The Board did come to order, and the crowd of interested citizens which filled every inch of available space in the Board of Trustees' room in the Municipal Building stopped smoking and talking and listened intently.

Mr. Whittleback was making a speech: He wanted to thank his fellow townsmen for electing him President. If he were an orator he could tell them in words how great an honor he considered they had done him, but he was not an orator, he was just a plain citizen. He would try to conduct the Public's business as he conducted his own business, by being honest in all matters and by considering what was for

the interest of all the people. He had promised before election to do certain things to improve conditions, and in this work he had no doubt the members of the Board who belonged to the opposing Party would co-operate.

When the applause ended the regular business proceeded. Mr. Whittleback appointed the various committees, and then the Board took up the matter of filling the appointive offices. There had been so many applicants for these positions and Mr. Whittleback had been so perplexed as to who were best fitted to fill them, that at Mr. Scouten's suggestion he turned the whole matter over to The Organization. Mr. Satterley nominated the candidates The Organization had selected, and the Democratic members made nominations from their Party. As the Board was evenly divided, Mr. Whittleback cast the deciding vote in favor of The Organization's candidates.

A counsel must be chosen and Mr. Satterley nominated Jerome Alexander Tubbmann. This was a surprise to everybody, for Mr. Tubbmann was nominally a Democrat. How-

ever, the Democrats made another nomination, but Mr. Tubbmann was chosen.

"Go out and find Mr. Tubbmann," said Mr. Whittleback to Policeman Rafferty, "and tell him we have elected him village counsel."

Mr. Tubbmann was evidently within a convenient distance, for in a few minutes he was ushered through the crowd and entered the sacred precincts within the railing where the Board was in session.

"Mr. Tubbmann," said Mr. Whittleback, "you have just been elected corporation counsel."

"I appreciate the honor," Mr. Tubbmann replied, and took his seat at the left of Mr. Whittleback.

Various resolutions were then introduced by the Republican members to provide ways of ending the abuses which Mr. Whittleback had found existing in the administrative affairs of the village, to the form of which resolutions the Democratic members objected, and there were amendments and substitutes, and accusations of "playing Politics" and fooling the

Public and obstructing the Public's business, all of which seemed to delight the audience, but at last the resolutions were carried as originally proposed.

Mr. Whittleback then told the Board that he would recommend the passage of an ordinance compelling the Board of Trustees upon the petition of fifteen per cent of the qualified voters to call a special election to decide whether any office holder who was not serving the people satisfactorily should be longer continued in office. He doubted the Board's authority to do this, however, without a special Act of the Legislature, and he would therefore ask the counsel for his opinion.

Mr. Tubbmann replied that it would be necessary to secure an Act of the Legislature authorizing the Board to pass such an ordinance. Mr. Satterley thereupon moved that the President and counsel be directed to go to the Capital and to endeavor to have such an Act passed. Much to the surprise of Mr. Whittleback, the Democratic members opposed this resolution, also, but it was carried by a party vote.

Having thus completely vanquished the Democrats on all points and redeemed his ante-election pledges, Mr. Whittleback said that if there were any citizens present who had suggestions to make in regard to public affairs he would be glad to hear from them.

After he made this statement he was surprised to see a number of the women of the village making their way through the crowd. They were under the command of a very determined leader, who had a masculine face, coarse black hair, and great brawny arms. She boldly entered the sacred precincts within the railing and ordered her followers to do likewise. Ranging them in a row at the foot of the Trustees' table, she turned to Mr. Whittleback and exclaimed:

"I'm Mrs. Diggin, President of the National Anti-Epicurean League, and these women are the officers of the local organization."

Mr. Whittleback looked at the seven representatives of the National Anti-Epicurean League and inquired what he could do for them.

"Do for us!" replied Mrs. Diggin, shaking

her fist. " You know well enough who we are and what you can do for us, and if you were my husband you'd learn in double quick time."

Mr. Whittleback congratulated himself then and there that he was not Mrs. Diggin's husband, but remained silent.

" You're a Reformer, aren't you? " she continued. " Why don't you do something that needs to be done more than anything you've mentioned in all your speeches? You know what we want you to do: Stop the sale of whiskey. Then we'll have some faith in your reform business."

" Shall I put her out? " asked Policeman Rafferty, coming forward and addressing Mr. Whittleback.

" Put me out! " said Mrs. Diggin, shaking her fist at Mr. Rafferty, who stopped abruptly. " Don't you dare lay your hands on me."

" Rafferty, " suggested Mr. Tubbmann, " you better go out and take a glass or two. You're in no condition to put them out now."

" Who are you to be telling a man to go and

get a drink to put a woman out?" fiercely demanded Mrs. Diggin, turning on Mr. Tubbmann. "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, and if you were my husband I'd see that you were."

"Whittleback," remarked Mr. Tubbmann, "it looks as though this woman wanted a husband. Can't we find one for her?"

"Well I'll be blessed if I can understand what all this means anyway," said Mr. Whittleback, in confusion at this unusual proceeding.
"Mr. Rafferty, please maintain order."

The audience was enjoying this latest proceeding so much that with the laughing and applauding there was much confusion.

"I'll tell you what this means," Mrs. Diggin continued in a milder tone, when quiet was restored: "Before election these local representatives of the League called upon you and asked you to pledge yourself against the sale of whiskey and you then stated you would do anything you could to help the cause of good government and humanity. Is the whiskey business an aid to good government or human-

ity? Now we want you to show your devotion to the cause of good government and humanity by passing an ordinance prohibiting the sale of whiskey in this village."

"That would be just about as practical," interposed Mr. Tubbmann, "as what a Board of Trustees did here a good many years ago. It was at the time kerosene first came into use. An old fellow down by the river had a candle factory and the kerosene began to interfere with his business; so he came up here one night and asked the Board to pass an ordinance prohibiting the use of kerosene. The Board passed the ordinance all right, gentlemen, but it didn't stop the use of kerosene."

Mr. Whittleback was apparently the only one who took Mrs. Diggin seriously, for he now explained to her that the sale of whiskey was legalized by the State and was therefore something over which the local authorities had no control, and no matter how wrong some people might consider its sale to be, so long as the law permitted its sale and so long as the majority of the people desired it to be sold,

and licensed men to sell it, local municipalities could do nothing.

"A pretty state of affairs," replied Mrs. Diggin: "Saloons to make drunkards and Keeley cures to cure 'em." And she launched forth into a violent attack upon the liquor traffic, denouncing it as an enemy of the Public and a wholesale producer of crime and suffering. Once or twice Policeman Rafferty endeavored to stop her tirade by pounding the floor lustily with his stick, but without success, for she was determined to have her say. She was also determined to put the Board on record on the question, for at the conclusion of her remarks she presented a petition from the women of the village asking the Board to approve a Bill then pending before the Legislature which permitted the people to say by their votes whether or not liquor should be longer sold in the State.

Although both Parties were divided on how to manage village affairs, they were united in their opposition to Mrs. Diggin's petition, for it would not be "good Politics" for either Party to approve such a Bill. After a hasty

conference it was decided that a Republican should make the motion to deny the petition and that a Democrat should second it.

While these important details were being arranged Mrs. Diggin's eagle eye caught sight of a bottle of Mr. Rafferty's whiskey through the open door of that officer's closet. No sooner was the motion denying the petition carried than she strode across the room and pounced upon the bottle. Then holding it up to the gaze of the audience she exclaimed: "No wonder we can't get anything done to stop the sale of it when they have it right by them all the time; no wonder," she continued, brandishing the bottle above her head, "when they all drink it, lawyers, politicians, reformers and all. You ought to be ashamed of yourselves!" she shouted, glaring at Mr. Whittleback, who expected to see the bottle fly at his head any minute. "You're a disgrace to the country!"

So saying, she sent the offending bottle crashing through the window, and shaking her fist at Mr. Whittleback and the Board of Trustees strode out of the room followed by her six companions.

CHAPTER XVII

WHEN Mr. Whittleback came out of the Post Office the next morning a woman's voice greeted him with a cheery good morning, and a young woman, who might have been anywhere from twenty-five to thirty years of age, held out her hand.

"I am Miss Alnor, the new school principal," she said, "and I am taking the liberty of introducing myself to the District Treasurer."

"Glad to meet you," said Mr. Whittleback, who had heard of the new principal, but had not yet met her. Sky View was one of the few places in the State that still had a woman principal for its High School. By her friends Miss Alnor was called plain in appearance, but with her ruddy cheeks, her waving brown hair, and her keen brown eyes, she was to Mr. Whittleback the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. It had always been his custom to send

each of the teachers her monthly pay check by mail, but he then and there decided to abandon this custom and to deliver them personally to the principal.

"You're too good looking for this place," he remarked with blunt frankness, after staring at her for he did not know how long; "we'll lose our principal I'm afraid," and was surprised at himself the next minute, for he had never made such a remark to a woman before in all his life.

"Ah, Mr. Whittleback, I am honored. But I was at your meeting last night. Everybody seemed to be there. I had heard so much about what was going to happen that I couldn't stay away. I congratulate you."

"Thank you," said Mr. Whittleback. "More happened than I expected. You weren't one of the — visitors?"

"Do you think the principal of the school would join in a demonstration against the District Treasurer?" inquired Miss Alnor, interrupting him. "When do you start for the

Capital?" she continued, seeing he was embarrassed and had nothing to say.

"Some day this week."

"I tell you Sky View is honored in honoring its President. We need more men like you in Politics, Mr. Whittleback. It seems to me you were the only man in the Board who didn't have an axe to grind last night. As a newly adopted citizen of Sky View I was proud of you."

"Thank you," Mr. Whittleback managed to reply; "I am glad to hear you say it. Of all the people who have said things like that to me lately you are the only one who seems to mean it."

"Indeed? But do you expect they will pass your Bill?"

"Yes," said Mr. Whittleback with vehemence, his embarrassment disappearing instantly. "Why shouldn't they? It's a good Bill. Why shouldn't the people have a right to do what that Bill gives them power to do?"

"Well, don't be disappointed if it isn't passed."

"What do you know about it?"

"I spent four years at the Capital and I didn't spend all my time in school, so I am not entirely unfamiliar with the way things are done," and there was a twinkle in her eye as she bowed and continued up Main Street.

"Why won't they pass it?" Mr. Whittleback called after her.

"Oh," she called back, laughing, "not because it isn't a good Bill."

Well, he thought, it was not a bad Bill. And here right at the beginning of his career this young woman, who had so much confidence in herself, had had the hardihood to tell him that his Reform measure would not pass. She would see how much a woman knew about public affairs. But she was proud of him and she had been at Sky View since September and he had not met her. What a fool he was. Attention to public affairs gave a man little time for social duties, but he would find it convenient to see her once a month at any rate.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE most important accomplishments in Politics as well as in science have often come from small beginnings. The visit of the Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback, President of Sky View, to the Capital of the State for the purpose of securing the passage of a law giving the citizens of his village the right to vote unfaithful public servants out of office might be regarded by most readers as a very commonplace affair. To tell the truth, Mr. Whittleback did not relish his task. Little did he think he would return with a national reputation and would show the people of the United States a way to regain their lost power.

At the earnest solicitation of Mr. Whittleback, Mr. Scouten consented to accompany him and Mr. Tubbmann on their mission. It was through Mr. Scouten's influence that "The Capital Flier" stopped at Sky View to receive the three distinguished passengers, and it was

at Mr. Tubbmann's suggestion that a large crowd of Mr. Whittleback's admirers was at the railroad station to wish him success in his important undertaking.

"The Flier" was known in political circles as "The Politicians' Special," because it was so largely patronized by the members of that profession. No sooner had Mr. Scouten and his companions entered the smoking car and seated themselves than they were surrounded by a number of those honorable gentlemen. They were under the leadership of the Hon. Timothy L. Whalen, and were going to the Capital to oppose the passage of a Bill which compelled the railroads to pay taxes on their franchises. Mr. Scouten and Mr. Whalen were old acquaintances, and after shaking hands Mr. Scouten introduced Mr. Whalen to Jerome Alexander Tubbmann, Corporation Counsel of Sky View, and to the Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback, who had won such popularity as a Reformer.

"A Reformer, Scouten," exclaimed the Hon.

Mr. Whalen. "What in the name of the Old Boy himself is a Reformer?"

"Sir," said Mr. Whittleback, "you see one now. I'm a Reformer. I'll be blessed if any one ought not to know what a Reformer is: He's a man who is as honest about the Public's business as he is about his own."

"What are you going to the Capital for?" inquired the Hon. Mr. Whalen, again addressing himself to Mr. Scouten.

Upon being informed that Mr. Scouten was going to the Capital with Mr. Whittleback to assist in securing the passage of a Bill which was to benefit the Public by giving the people a chance to get rid of unfaithful office holders before the expiration of the term for which they were elected, Mr. Whalen could conceal his mirth no longer, and turning to his lieutenants exclaimed: "Boys, take a look at that man Scouten, will you. He's going to the Capital in the interests of the Public." After again looking Mr. Whittleback and Mr. Scouten over, he retired with his lieutenants and re-

marked to those gentlemen that something had surely gone wrong with that man Scouten and that he must be losing his mind.

"I'll be blessed if I think much of him," remarked Mr. Whittleback.

"No," Mr. Scouten replied. "He's what you might call a black sheep of the profession."

Soon a stranger came down the aisle and stopped in front of Mr. Whittleback.

"Is this the Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback?"

"That's my name."

The stranger had a favor to ask. He wanted to get a pass on the railroad. He had seen Mr. Whittleback's picture in the paper as a prominent politician and he thought he would ask for a free trip to Niagara Falls for himself and family.

"Sir," replied Mr. Whittleback, "I'm not a politician, I'm a Reformer."

"A what?" asked the man with some surprise.

"A Reformer, sir."

"It's all about the same thing, isn't it?"

"No. I'll be blessed if it is."

At this point Mr. Scouten entered into the conversation and asked if the stranger lived in Mr. Whittleback's Assembly District, and being answered in the affirmative, inquired how many votes he controlled. The stranger said he controlled five votes beside his own.

Mr. Scouten said: "Yes, Mr. Whittleback will get a pass for you, if you will keep it between ourselves and remember it on election day. You will probably have an opportunity to vote for Mr. Whittleback in the near future."

Upon his promise to comply with these conditions, Mr. Scouten took the stranger's name and address, and shook hands with him. Then Mr. Whittleback also shook hands with him, and said it gave him great pleasure to make his acquaintance.

"He's the kind of man to help," remarked Mr. Scouten, after the stranger had gone, "for he controls votes and in Politics votes are what you must have to win."

All this time The Flier was rushing along at breakneck speed, as though anxious to get its

distinguished passengers to the Capital as soon as possible. It dashed through cities, busy with traffic and trade, and on through villages and smaller towns. Through quiet farm lands it went; past school houses and country churches; past waterfalls and quiet lakes, humble cottages and country stores; past costly mansions and through fine estates; through great stretches of open country it went, and on to country hamlets and sleepy villages, through tunnels and over trestles, past signal towers and signs and water plugs and mail cranes and switch engines and mile posts and freight yards, till panting and puffing and screeching it entered the Capital in triumph.

CHAPTER XIX

THE most popular hotel in the Capital at that time was the Delaware House. There the most prominent legislators resided during the sessions. Politicians from all parts of the State made it their headquarters while at the Capital. There all important matters of legislation were decided upon by the Party leaders prior to their consideration by Senate or Assembly. It was the barometer of political activity, not only in the Capital, but throughout the State, and was the Mecca of reporters and journalists and leaders and lieutenants and office seekers and lobbyists of all ranks and descriptions. It was to the Delaware House that Mr. Scouten conducted his companions. The place was comparatively quiet when they arrived, for the Legislature was in session, but by the time they had selected their apartments and taken some refreshments it was all activity again, for the Legislature had taken a recess,

and the bar room and the smoking rooms were filled with distinguished politicians and legislators, who chatted, smoked and drank, and laid plans for trapping the Opposition on the following day.

Mr. Scouten immediately sought out the Assemblyman from their district, the Hon. John L. Whodd, and finding that gentleman engaged in a drinking bout in the bar room, with some difficulty persuaded him to come upstairs.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Scouten, when he had ushered the Hon. Mr. Whodd into the presence of Mr. Whittleback and Mr. Tubbmann, "this is my warm personal friend and the distinguished representative from our district, the Hon. John L. Whodd."

"Glad to see you," said the Hon. Mr. Whodd, giving Mr. Whittleback and Mr. Tubbmann a hearty handshake. "Come on down and have a drink with me, gentlemen."

"No, thank you," replied Mr. Scouten. "We want you to give us some help in passing a Bill we are interested in. Sit down."

Mr. Whodd laid his hand on his stomach

and cast a longing look toward the door, but at length consented to take a seat. He was a fat, red-faced, happy-go-lucky man, and had been elected to the Assembly because of his liberality in the matter of free drinks and his willingness to do as he was told.

"Here, gentlemen," he exclaimed, taking some cigars from his pocket and handing them to his constituents, "you won't drink with me; now see if you'll smoke with me." Then looking Mr. Whittleback over very carefully, he turned to Mr. Scouten and inquired: "Who'd you say he was, Scouten?"

"Why, Whodd, that's the President of Sky View, Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback."

"Is he an Organization man?"

"What's the matter with you, Whodd?" demanded Mr. Scouten sternly. "Of course Mr. Whittleback's an Organization man."

"Nothing like finding out, you know," replied Mr. Whodd. "Come on down and have a drink to the Organization."

Mr. Scouten's reply to this second invitation was to ask Mr. Whittleback for the Bill.

"There, Whodd, is the Bill we want to get passed."

Mr. Whodd took the Bill and started to read it, but he evidently met with very indifferent success in understanding it, for he stopped suddenly, took the cigar from his mouth, and exclaimed: "I don't know whether it's poor whiskey or what, but I can't read for sour apples. Anyway, all these things have got to be submitted to the Manager of the House and be passed on by him and the leaders of the Majority before they're introduced." And Mr. Whodd handed the Bill back to Mr. Scouten without knowing a single provision it contained.

"Well," inquired Mr. Scouten, "what are you going to do?"

"Do?" replied Mr. Whodd. "Why do what any representative of his constituents ought to do: I'll take you before the Manager and the Leaders of the Majority and let you state your case. But I won't do it," he continued, rising and going towards the door, "till you come down and have a drink on me."

"Have it sent up," suggested Mr. Tubbmann.

"Sure," said Mr. Whodd, and ringing for a bell boy he gave his order.

"The reason I asked if you were an Organization man," he remarked, addressing Mr. Whittleback, after they had taken their first glass, "was because you don't get very much up here unless you are an Organization man," and Mr. Whodd laughed a hearty laugh, placed his hand upon his stomach and declared he felt better. "Another thing," he continued, "you don't want to do much talking to the Snags. If you do, you'll get into trouble."

"I'll be blessed if I know what they are," said Mr. Whittleback.

"Why, these infernal newspaper men. They bother the life out of a man; they're everywhere and anywhere with their infernal questions, and then if you don't tell 'em all your business, they'll denounce you."

"Gentlemen," exclaimed Mr. Whittleback, "drink to their defeat."

"That I will," said the Hon. Mr. Whodd,

drinking three glasses as a mark of his special favor to this toast.

"Whodd," interposed Mr. Scouten, "I think we had better go and meet the Manager of the House as soon as possible."

"Scouten," replied Mr. Whodd with contempt, "you're all work and no play, and that'll make Scouten or Whodd or anyone else a dull boy. Sit down and take it easy. I've been up there at the Capitol all day listening to a lot of infernal fools make a lot of infernal speeches against the railroads granting passes. Why, if it wasn't for passes half of us would never get here. You came on passes yourself, didn't you?"

Mr. Scouten admitted that they had, and this reminded him that Mr. Whittleback wanted a pass for one of his constituents.

"Certainly, Scouten, certainly. All I've got to do is to ask for 'em. A man ought to be able to do that."

Mr. Scouten now arose and again requested Mr. Whodd to present them to the Manager of the House. The contents of the bottle had

not been entirely consumed and Mr. Whodd cast a longing look toward the remaining portion as he slowly rose to his feet, at the same time remarking that any men who could not drink what they had there were not fit to put their heads in the Capital. He then led the way through a broad hall to the outer entrance of the Manager's private apartments. Here was found one of the Manager's lieutenants. Being well known to that worthy, however, Mr. Whodd had no difficulty in securing admission for himself and his companions.

It was a handsome suite of rooms in which they found themselves. Mr. Whodd, who was familiar with the place, led the way from room to room, and at last they came to the sanctum sanctorum, before the door of which two lieutenants were posted. One of these went inside to report the visitors, and returned in a few moments with the information that they might enter.

When Mr. Whittleback stepped into this sacred place he found himself in a large room, with rich carpets upon the floor and costly paint-

ings upon the walls. At the farther end of the room before a large table sat the Manager of the Assembly, and seated around and behind him were a score of the members of the Lower House, representatives from as many counties.

"Hello, Whodd," said the Manager, giving him a bland smile, which seemed to Mr. Whittleback to come to perfection, "what can we do for you?"

"Kingfisher," said Mr. Whodd, "I've got some good Republicans here from my county who're interested in some legislation. This," he continued, as Mr. Scouten, came forward, "is the Hon. Henrick Scouten, leader of our county; Scouten, the Hon. Harrison Kingfisher, Manager of the Assembly."

The Hon. Mr. Kingfisher arose, gave Mr. Scouten a hearty handshake, and expressed his delight at meeting him, while Mr. Scouten responded in much the same manner.

"Mr. Kingfisher," said Mr. Scouten, turning to Mr. Whittleback, "let me introduce you to the President of Sky View, who has won such

popularity as a Reformer, the Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback."

"Glad to see you all, gentlemen," Mr. Kingfisher declared, after Mr. Whittleback and Mr. Tubbmann had been presented, "and glad to see you in the Capital. Let me introduce you to some more good Republicans."

So saying, he introduced them to his distinguished associates. There was the Hon. Peter Smiley, who belonged to more clubs and social organizations than any other man in the State; the Hon. Horatio Burdock, who had the reputation of being the best dressed man in the city; the Hon. Stephen Goodfellow, famous in his district as a church member, but known in the political circles of the Capital as the man who had been selected by The Organization to corrupt young and inexperienced legislators; the Hon. Horace Drumgoole, who came to the Legislature poor, but had become rich during the last session; the Hon. Richard Spoule, who was the best billiard player in town; the Hon. William Grundage, who represented the liquor interests of the State; the Hon. Silas Grabb, who boasted

that he came to the Legislature to represent himself, first, last and always, in which respect he differed from his associates, who represented the Railroads, Insurance, Gas and Trust Companies, and various other corporations; and last but not least, the Hon. Robert Brassfield, smiling, calculating and shrewd, who combined so many of the qualities of a knave and a statesman that he was looked upon as the most promising man for Manager of the Assembly when that distinguished statesman, the present Manager, should lose his grip upon the political machine.

These "Honorables" having been formally introduced, all resumed their seats, and while Mr. Kingfisher finished signing a number of letters which lay before him, Mr. Whittleback had an opportunity of looking him over.

He was a man with a giant frame and a savage looking face, which was so full of wrinkles and ridges that it bore not a slight resemblance to a prize bull dog's, and this resemblance was further enhanced by his habit of scowling and shaking his head and sticking up his nose at any and all times. His massive jaws seemed to be

always waiting to get hold of some political enemy and tear him to pieces. Years before, prior to his entrance into public life, when an obscure political leader in a western district, he had been the superintendent of a large factory, when he had conceived the happy idea of taxing the employees, male and female alike, to swell the funds of the local Organization. This brilliant stroke had been followed by the bold move of making away with several hundred adverse ballots at a certain election and thus fulfilling his pledge to keep his county in the Republican ranks no matter what came. Because of these evidences of singular political ability, The Organization sent him to the Legislature. By reason of his faithfulness to his Party and his careful study of Politics, he at length became Manager of the Assembly, and a very successful and able Manager he was, for he never forgot a friend or forgave a foe, and was a terror to the Opposition, concerning which his favorite slogan was: "Knock 'em down and drag 'em out." All Bills were referred to him before being introduced and no

Bill could be reported out of committee without his consent, for the chairmen of all committees were named by him. No appointments were made without his O. K., and no legislator could receive any patronage or any courtesies unless he voted according to his orders.

"Now, gentlemen," he remarked, leaning back in his chair and elevating his feet upon the table, "you may proceed."

Mr. Tubbmann then arose and running the fingers of his right hand rapidly through his hair said that he was honored in having been chosen to present the Bill to the distinguished statesmen. The village of Sky View, from which he came, had been afflicted with officials who had neglected their duty, and to guard against the continuance of such men in office in the future the distinguished President of the village, the Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback, had conceived the happy idea of giving the people a chance to terminate their contract of employment by voting them out of office at a special election to be called for that purpose upon the petition of fifteen per cent of the qualified elec-

tors. Before the Board of Trustees could pass such an ordinance, however, they must be authorized to do so by an Act of the Legislature, and it was to secure the passage of such an Act that they had been sent to the Capital. But other municipalities were in the same position as Sky View, and to give to all the people of the State the same weapon against faithless public servants the Bill had been drawn to make it a general law. Need he point out to the honorable gentlemen that in many places public servants failed to serve or to represent their constituents? If this Bill passed, no longer would the people be obliged to wait until the terms of office of such expired and then perhaps have them renominated through influence or corruption. They could be voted out of office at once.

"The object of this Bill," Mr. Tubbmann concluded, after eloquently setting forth its merits, "is to restore representative government."

"That Bill is so fixed up," remarked Mr. Kingfisher, after he had finished reading it,

"that a man can hardly tell what its provisions are. A nice piece of work, Tubbmann. We may be able to get it through without the Opposition finding out what it is."

"I'm for it all right," said the Hon. Mr. Grundage, "as long as it don't hurt the liquor business."

"Yes," assented the Hon. Mr. Whodd. "Before we do any more talking let's have a drink of something."

"Whodd," exclaimed the Hon. Mr. Kingfisher, "you're worse than a fish!" And all the "Honorables" had a laugh at the Hon. Mr. Whodd's expense.

"There's one important thing you've left out of that Bill," Mr. Kingfisher continued, thoughtfully, "it creates no patronage. We'll have a fight on our hands this fall and we'll need all the help we can get from things of this kind to pull us through."

"Yes," said the Hon. Mr. Grabb. "Have the Bill provide for the division of the State into districts and the appointment of inspectors

for each district who shall have charge of the elections held under this Act."

"We will have no objection to that," remarked Mr. Tubbmann.

"The greatest trouble will be in passing it. The Democrats will fight like dogs to keep us from getting that patronage." This from the Hon. Mr. Spoule.

"Agree to give them a share, then they'll be for it," suggested the Hon. Mr. Smiley, laughing.

"Well," declared Mr. Kingfisher with emphasis, "I don't see why that Bill isn't all right, with the addition Grabb suggests. We've got to make about so many laws every session or the people will think we aren't earning our money. The only trouble, as Spoule says, will be in getting it through. Say, Jim," he continued, addressing his private secretary, "go across the hall and bring Brandywine in here. Brandywine isn't a member of the Legislature, Scouten, but he's the smartest man in his line in the State."

A lieutenant then informed Mr. Kingfisher that some of the "Snags" were at the door and desired to come in.

"Confound them!" ejaculated the Hon. Mr. Kingfisher, scowling and sticking up his nose and snapping his jaw. "Scouten, they're the bane of our existence. They're a menace to the country, everywhere and in everything. Say I'll give them a statement later in the evening," he continued, addressing the lieutenant. "Ah, here comes Brandywine."

All turned toward the door and in came the Hon. Wallace Brandywine, smiling and bowing as though he would melt away into a sunbeam at any minute. He was tall and lank and had a pleasing personality and great ability as a public speaker. He was already one of the most eloquent advocates of his Party on the stump at every election, and afterwards became a figure of national prominence. He was now at the Capital representing a well-known public service corporation.

"Hello, Brandywine," said Mr. Kingfisher, rising and going forward. "Gentlemen," he

continued, turning to Mr. Whittleback and his companions, "this is our distinguished fellow Republican, the Hon. Wallace Brandywine; Mr. Brandywine, some good Republicans from Poquogg County."

"Poquogg County," said Mr. Brandywine, laughing, as he shook their hands; "why, I've heard of Poquogg County."

"These gentlemen have a Bill they want to get passed," Mr. Kingfisher continued. "It strikes me as being a mighty good Bill, for if it passes it will give us a whole lot of patronage. We would like to get your opinion on it, Brandywine."

Mr. Brandywine bowed and smiled and asked to hear the Bill.

"The title of this Bill," said Mr. Tubbmann, after briefly reviewing Mr. Whittleback's political triumphs, "is 'A Bill to Restore Representative Government,' and provides that whenever it becomes apparent that any officer or officers elected by the people of any town, municipality or city is or are not faithfully discharging the duty or duties of the office or offices

to which he or they have been elected, an election shall be called upon the petition of fifteen per cent of the qualified electors of said town, municipality or city, to vote upon the question of whether such officer or officers shall be longer continued in office."

Mr. Brandywine, who had subjected Mr. Whittleback to a close scrutiny during Mr. Tubbmann's remarks, now addressed him and inquired:

"How do you like being a politician?"

"I'm not a politician, I'm a Reformer, sir."

Mr. Scouten, whose practiced eyes saw at once that Mr. Brandywine did not approve the Bill, now entered the conversation:

"Yes," said he, "Mr. Whittleback is a most successful Reformer. He is now President of Sky View, but next year he will be a member of the Legislature."

A member of the Legislature! This gave an entirely different aspect to the matter. Mr. Brandywine had almost made a grave political mistake.

"Why, Mr. Whittleback," he exclaimed,

giving that gentleman one of his most winning smiles, "I am glad to know you and to hear about your work. Reform is something that is always needed. May the gods smile upon you, — Kingfisher, it's a good Bill and will be popular with the people."

"I thought you'd like it," replied that distinguished legislator. "We'll add the amendment Grabb suggests and let Whodd introduce it in the morning."

Hardly had these important details been arranged when a lieutenant entered and announced that a strange woman was at the door demanding admission.

"Who is she?"

"She says her name's Diggin."

"Yes," said Mr. Kingfisher, "she's President of some National Anti something, isn't she?"

"National Anti-Epicurean League," suggested the lieutenant.

"That's it," repeated Mr. Kingfisher, "National Anti-Epicurean League. Jim," he

continued, turning to the private secretary, "what under the sun is that?"

"They must be opposed to eating too much," replied the private secretary.

"No," exclaimed the Hon. Mr. Grundage, "they're opposed to the sale of whiskey. Confound her and all her tribe!"

"Why don't you have your liquor people buy her off, Grundage?" inquired the Hon. Mr. Kingfisher.

"Haven't we tried? You can't buy 'em. They've got a lot of Bills introduced again this session. Some day the pressure will be so great we'll have to report 'em out of committee and then youse fellows will have to stand up and beat 'em on the floor."

"She can certainly talk some though," remarked the Hon. Mr. Spoule. "I heard her last night over in State Street Church. She said your liquor business, Grundage, makes seventy-five per cent of the criminals and paupers of the State."

"Suppose we do?" retorted the Hon. Mr. Grundage. "Don't we pay the State for mak-

ing 'em? And if we pay for making 'em, what's the odds?"

"She's dangerous, though," said the Hon. Silas Grabb. "You ought to pull her off some way, Grundage. If these women had a vote they'd turn us all out of office."

"Ha, ha!" exclaimed the Hon. Mr. Brandywine, who had lingered to hear this bit of legislative gossip. "If you're going to complicate our troubles by getting the fair sex in the game, I'm going to get out."

"Yes," said Mr. Kingfisher, addressing the lieutenant, "and tell her to get out too, and mind, sir, you don't let her get in here again."

CHAPTER XX

WHEN Mr. Whittleback and his associates returned to their apartments they were bombarded by messenger boys bearing cards and communications from newspaper reporters and political correspondents requesting an interview, to all of which Mr. Scouten responded that such interview would not be granted. It was a favorite move of the politicians of that period to hold off important railroad and corporation Bills until near the end of the session, and then, in the rush of business before adjournment, to get them passed without anybody discovering what they really were. The news had now got abroad in newspaper circles of the Capital that three distinguished politicians had just arrived in the city with an important Bill, and the leading newspapers had offered a prize to the reporter who should first secure information as to its provisions.

"They've heard that something is going on and they want to find out what it is," remarked Mr. Scouten.

"Won't they ever stop coming?" inquired Mr. Whittleback, as the cards and requests kept increasing.

"Don't know and I don't care," replied that untiring public servant. "Whodd said not to talk and we had better not. We're getting along pretty well."

"Yes," responded Mr. Whittleback, who was delighted at the progress they had made.

"You can get anything here if you've got the pull," interposed Mr. Tubbmann, "for Kingfisher runs the Assembly and Dilley runs the Senate and Brandywine runs 'em all! A very interesting state of affairs in a democracy!"

"Mr. Whittleback," said Mr. Scouten, without noticing Mr. Tubbmann's observation, "you might have been surprised at what I said to Brandywine when we were discussing the Bill, but I told him before telling you because I saw that was necessary to get his support. Whodd's a man who ought to be promoted and

The Organization has decided to promote him. He's to run for the Senate this fall and we've chosen you as his successor."

Like most deserved honors, this one came to Mr. Whittleback entirely unsought and entirely unexpected. He was so surprised he did not know what to say and hence remained silent.

Mr. Scouten, who knew well how to overcome the objections of a prospective candidate, if objections there were, began to tell him about the opportunities an Assemblyman enjoyed of serving the Public and what an honor it was to be a member of the Legislature. Before he had finished, the door opened suddenly and in came the Hon. John L. Whodd, who had just been victorious in a drinking contest in the bar room.

"Hello, gentlemen," said the Hon. Mr. Whodd, whose face was redder than usual and who was a bit unsteady on his legs, "I'm glad to see you," and he thereupon proceeded to give each a hearty handshake, at the same time declaring that he was glad they were "Honorable" for he was an "Honorable" himself and they were all "Honorable" together.

"Sit down, Whodd," said Mr. Scouten, "we want to talk to you."

"Then you've got to drink with me." And going to the bottle which was on the table Mr. Whodd insisted on helping everybody to a generous supply of its contents, after which he helped himself.

"I was just telling Mr. Whittleback," Mr. Scouten continued, after Mr. Whodd had at last seated himself, "about the plans of The Organization for the fall campaign."

"Did you say he was an Organization man all right, Scouten?" pointing to Mr. Whittleback.

"What's the matter with you, Whodd?" exclaimed Mr. Scouten, fiercely. "I want you to give Mr. Whittleback an idea of the duties of an Assemblyman."

"It's this way," Mr. Whodd replied: "You can be just about as active a representative as you want to be. Kingfisher's taken charge of everything this session and last session and I don't know how many sessions before that. Grabb's always getting up reports and calling

for investigations, but they don't amount to anything except to take up time and get somebody to buy him off."

"Tell him about the committees," suggested Mr. Scouten.

"Yes, the committees. In your first year if you stand in well they'll put you on a committee. After you've been here long enough to learn the ropes they'll make you chairman of a committee. The committees consider Bills which are referred to them and report favorably or unfavorably or never report at all. For instance, I'm Chairman of the Committee on Laws and Public Morals and all Bills affecting those subjects are referred to my Committee," and Mr. Whodd helped himself to another glass of the contents of the bottle and insisted on helping the rest too.

"Say, Whodd," interposed Mr. Scouten, "if you keep on the way you're going you won't be in any condition to take charge of any Bill to-morrow."

"That shows how much you know about me," replied the Hon. Mr. Whodd with great

contempt. "Why, I did Kingfisher and Dilley and Grundage and the whole crowd of 'em up last night and was bright as a lark this morning. So you see, gentlemen," he continued, after he had given himself this flattering recommendation, "you needn't worry about me."

"Gentlemen," exclaimed Mr. Tubbmann, rising and making a majestic bow, "there's a divinity that shapes our ends. Whodd, you and I and all of us will pass away. It behooves us, then, to get our epitaphs. Here's mine," he continued, gazing far off into space and then condescending to come back to earth again:

"Jerome Alexander Tubbmann,
School teacher and lawyer,
Who never sold anybody out,
And died game."

"Say, Tubbmann," said Mr. Whodd, laughing heartily, "if you can't take a drink or two without getting sentimental, I'm going to leave."

"And I'll be blessed," interposed Mr. Whit-

tleback, who had never crowded so much into one day before and who found he could not keep up with the pace set by Mr. Whodd, "if I don't think we'd better all go to bed while we can get there. Mr. Scouten, I'll talk to you in the morning."

CHAPTER XXI

THE Bill to Restore Representative Government attracted attention at once. No sooner was it introduced and published in the press than it became, as the Hon. Wallace Brandywine had prophesied, immensely popular with the people. Little did the Hon. Harrison Kingfisher and his distinguished associates suppose it would create such a sensation. They had attached little importance to it outside of the opportunity it afforded for securing much needed patronage, and were therefore little prepared for the enthusiasm it aroused. Not in many years had a Bill found such instant favor with the Public. The morning following its introduction the whole State was talking about it. All eyes were turned to the Capital. Apparently there was not a village or a township but had officials who ought to be gotten rid of. Moreover, the principle of popular sovereignty was at stake. The various Societies

for the Protection of Civil Liberty entered the lists in its behalf and sent delegations to the Capital to demand its speedy passage. The Liberty Leagues, and Civic Leagues, the Citizen Alliances, and Vigilance Committees, sent resolutions praying for its passage and advocating its passage and demanding its passage. The members of the Legislature were bombarded with letters and telegrams requesting and demanding their favorable vote upon it, and threatening dire consequences if it were not passed; and the press — was not the press always on the side of the people, for were not the interests of the people and of the press identical? The freedom of both must be preserved. Anything which gave the people more power was to the people's advantage; and did not this Bill give greater power to the people in their conflict with the politicians? Who would oppose the Bill? Those who were not representing the people and who would be likely to lose their offices. And one newspaper boldly published a list of those members of the Legislature who were notorious for their devotion to the

interests of the corporations and the railroads in preference to the interests of the people. The Legislature existed but to enact into law the wish of the people, and if the legislators did not obey the people's will, woe unto them, for the people had a remedy. That was the advantage of a democracy.

Who was the man who had dared to propose such a beneficent measure? He was a true champion of the people and should be supported and encouraged. Mr. Whittleback had letters pouring in upon him from all parts of the State, thanking him and praising him and congratulating him and requesting his photograph and his autograph. Reporters followed him constantly. When he appeared upon the street he was surrounded by a crowd of newspaper men, for the Public wanted to know all about this champion of its rights, and what he did and what he said and what he looked like. His picture was in every paper and he was "written up" by special correspondents, each of whom seemed to find something new to say about him, until from being almost unknown

outside of Poquogg County, he became within a few days after his arrival in the Capital one of the most talked of men in the State, if not on the American continent.

The legislative leaders, however, now found themselves in a very embarrassing position, for the Bill aroused the unanimous opposition of the politicians of both Parties. If it was so popular with the people, they argued, it must be dangerous to themselves, many of whom might be voted out of office should it become a law. Such a law would ruin the whole scheme of party politics and lay the politicians open to any and all sorts of attacks from the Public. No political leader would ever know where he was at. There would be no stability left to the government. No Organization office holder would be safe. What was the inducement to work and elect your candidates when the people could vote them out of office if they happened to do something wrong? How were political leaders ever going to dispense offices to trusted lieutenants with any security if the people were given the right to vote them out of office?

Organization orators waxed eloquent on the benefits of political leadership, the advantages of political Parties, and the serious damage that would be done were such a blow struck at the foundations of the government; and political leaders of all kinds and descriptions and of all degrees of political power came on to the Capital and laid siege to the Legislature to prevent the passage of a Bill which made such a heinous attack upon the sacred and vested rights of political Parties and Party leaders.

A serious situation indeed! Here were the people, on the one hand, demanding the passage of the Bill; and on the other hand were the politicians, always distrustful of the people, whom they ever feared, demanding its defeat. Were it to pass, it might strip the politicians of their power, and were it defeated, popular indignation might run so high that the Democrats would make it an issue in the next campaign and the Republicans lose the fall election.

Meanwhile the Bill had passed its first reading and had been referred to the Committee

on Laws and Public Morals. The Committee fixed an early day for a public hearing and invited both sides to present their arguments.

The hearing was held in the Assembly Chamber. The Hon. John L. Whodd, Chairman of the Committee, honored the occasion by solemnly resolving that morning that he would never drink another drop of whiskey as long as he lived. This was no unusual thing for that gentleman, however, for he was accustomed to make this resolution whenever he had on hand anything he considered of special importance, and that the Committee had an important matter on its hands Mr. Whodd had been made to realize, for in the last few days he had received more letters and telegrams about this Bill than he had theretofore received in all the years of his public life.

When the members of the Committee arrived and took their places they found the Chamber already filled to overflowing with an eager audience made up of citizens from all parts of the State. Mr. Tubbmann was the first speaker for the Bill. It was an occasion

worthy of his best efforts and he rose to the occasion. His speech is talked of about the Capital to this very day. He traced the progress of popular government from the early days of the long ago, told how through the ages slowly but surely over a pathway lighted with the sacrifices of martyr patriots men had fought their way upward to a government of the people, for the people and by the people as founded by the Revolutionary fathers. Then prosperity had come, and in their prosperity the people had forgotten to guard their rights, and there was always some one to usurp their rights. While the people slept, the politicians and political bosses had robbed them of their freedom and had usurped their inalienable right to choose their own officials. What right had these self-constituted political bosses to say who should be nominated for every office from that of Governor of the State down to constable? That was tyranny of the worst sort. He could see little difference between bondage to a king and bondage to a political boss. But in every hour of need there was a man raised up to fight the

people's cause. Such a man had come forward now to lead the people of his State, and Nation it might be, from the bondage of political Parties to the perfect freedom which was their God-given right. Need he tell the Committee who was that man? The whole State was talking about him and about this Bill, the passage of which he was advocating. Who would object to the Bill? Every office holder who was a crook. Honest men had nothing to fear. No political boss would dare nominate dishonest men if this Bill became a law. Who were opposed to the Bill? Every politician and political boss who feared the people. Who favored the Bill? The people of the State. "Gentlemen," he concluded dramatically, "the people demand the passage of this Bill. Obey the will of the people and favorably report it."

It was a masterful effort, so masterful indeed that Mr. Whittleback thought the applause would never end, so masterful that for the life of him he did not see how anything could be said in opposition. Imagine his surprise, therefore, when the Hon. Mr. Grundage arose and

asked permission to address the Committee in opposition to the Bill.

"Yes," said the Hon. Mr. Whodd, who knew Mr. Grundage had been selected by the politicians to oppose the Bill, "come on up and speak your piece."

This was all very funny, declared Mr. Grundage, laughing heartily. It was a fine theory, but it was impractical; the politicians would soon find a way to nullify it. You could not make men honest by law. It was better to have bad men in office than to be changing office holders all the time. There would be no stability to the government. The people were fickle anyway. You could never trust them. They voted for a Republican to-day and for a Democrat to-morrow. This was only one of their passing whims. The Committee need not be afraid to report the Bill unfavorably, for the Public was quick to forget and would forget all about the matter by next election. The legislators should act as the guardians of the people, who should not always have what they wanted. Had anybody thought of the money

it would cost to pay all these inspectors that were provided for in the Bill?

Mr. Grundage's speech was by no means a short lived affair, and after he had talked for nearly two hours he seemed to be no nearer the end than when he began. He was, however, a very fat man and the exercise of speaking proved very burdensome, so that he was at length compelled to stop from sheer exhaustion, asking the Committee, however, for leave to present further facts at a subsequent hearing.

"Further facts!" exclaimed a voice in the rear of the Chamber, and the redoubtable Mrs. Diggin came forward. "You're a miserable bloat," she continued, shaking her fist at the Hon. Mr. Grundage, who was panting and puffing from the effects of his speech. Then turning to the Committee she announced:

"Gentlemen, I'm Mrs. Diggin, President of the National Anti-Epicurean League, and I want to tell you we're for this Bill."

"What's the National Anti-Epicurean League got to do with this Bill?" demanded the

Hon. Mr. Grundage of the Committee. "This isn't a temperance Bill."

The audience, which had grown restless during Mr. Grundage's long speech, was now all attention and eagerly waited to hear Mrs. Diggin's reply to this inquiry.

"I'll tell you why we're for this Bill," she responded, turning and facing the audience. "Half of your public officials aren't enforcing the Excise Law in this State. This Bill gives the people a chance to vote such fellows out of office, and they'll enforce the law rather than lose their salaries. You're afraid of the National Anti-Epicurean League, aren't you?" she continued, turning upon Mr. Grundage again. "We'll make you a good deal more afraid of it before we get through. Very little you care about increasing taxes. You're afraid you might sell less whiskey."

Here the Hon. Mr. Whodd came to the aid of his brother "Honorable" and inquired of Mrs. Diggin whether she intended to make a speech or to abuse representatives of the people.

"Representatives of the people!" she exclaimed. "You represent the people a lot, don't you? He represents the liquor business," pointing to the Hon. Mr. Grundage, "and another represents some other monopoly, and another something else he hadn't ought to represent. You ought to be proud of your representatives," she continued, turning and facing the audience, which laughed heartily at this sally. "You don't want them I know, but you can't get rid of them. This Bill will help you to get rid of some of them."

After this outburst, Mr. Whodd wisely concluded that it would be best to interrupt Mrs. Diggin no further, and she thereupon proceeded to give her lecture on "The Effects of Whiskey on the Human Organism." Unfortunately, this did not prove popular with the audience, for diseased anatomies and horrid deaths were not pleasant things to contemplate, but these she declared were the inevitable results of whiskey drinking and whiskey selling. Mr. Whodd, however, was strengthened in his total abstinence resolution as Mrs. Diggin fixed her

eyes sternly upon him during one of her vehement passages and referred ominously to "flushed faces" and "discolored eyes." Having talked for nearly an hour upon this edifying subject, she concluded by warning the Committee that if they did not favorably report the Bill she would publicly denounce them in every lecture she delivered in the State in the next three months.

No sooner had Mrs. Diggin concluded her remarks than Mr. Whodd, who for his part could see no sense in the Bill anyway, and who distrusted his ability to stay awake longer, announced that the Committee would then adjourn and if further arguments were to be made another hearing would be given.

But popular clamor was so loud for the Bill that the Committee decided to report it favorably and let both sides fight it out on the floor of the Assembly. There it was debated for several days before crowded galleries. Orators on both sides presented with much vehemence its advantages and its defects; all sorts of plans were laid to defeat it and all sorts of plans laid

to defeat the plans to defeat it; there were caucuses and conferences, and propositions and counter-propositions, and charges of corruption and charges of intimidation, until at last by a narrow margin it passed its second reading and the third day following was fixed as the time for taking the final vote. Those were three anxious days for Mr. Whittleback and for thousands of his countrymen, for notwithstanding the fact that Mr. Kingfisher remained loyal to the Bill, no one could predict with any certainty the final result.

The momentous day has arrived. A vast throng fills every inch of standing room in the galleries and corridors. The faces of the legislators are tense with excitement; hardly one but has some constituent among the audience. In a country which is never tired of boasting of its freedom the citizens of a great State have been seeking by threats and petitions to force the men they have elected to office to pass a law they desire enacted.

A silence has fallen on the Assembly. Every

one is attention. The Hon. Harrison Kingfisher is even now thinking of the patronage which will be at his disposal when the Bill becomes a law. The silence is broken by the voice of the Clerk announcing the name of the Bill, "A Bill to Restore Representative Government," and almost immediately he starts to call the roll and the voting begins. Ayes are followed by nays and nays by ayes in rapid succession. Mr. Kingfisher has worked hard for the Bill, but Mr. Grundage has worked hard against it. Two members have changed their votes since the last reading and have now voted no. The excitement becomes intense. It is now a grave question whether the Bill will pass. Mr. Kingfisher, who is keeping tally in his private record book, sees that it is very close, so close, indeed, that after the "V's" have been reached the Bill needs one more vote to pass, and there is but one more name on the list: John L. Whodd. Mr. Kingfisher hastily turns to the seat occupied by that distinguished legislator. Mr. Whodd is not there. It was not Mr. Kingfisher's fault that he should forget

to look after Mr. Whodd, for was it to be expected that the Chairman of the Committee which favorably reported the Bill would need any looking after?

"We forgot to keep Whodd sober," mutters Mr. Kingfisher to himself. "Grundage has got him drunk. A fatal mistake."

An instant later the Clerk announces: "John L. Whodd of Poquogg."

No response.

"John L. Whodd of Poquogg," repeats the Clerk.

Still no response.

"Absent," shouts the Sergeant-at-Arms, as a titter runs through the ranks of the Bill's opponents, who know Mr. Whodd's weakness for good whiskey.

"John L. Whodd of Poquogg," shouts the Clerk for the third and last time.

Still no response.

"Lost," announces the Speaker, after the official count has been made.

"Lost," repeats the Sergeant-at-Arms.

Lost! After three weeks of hard work and prodigious effort. Lost, after the hardest fight that had been made for a Bill in many a day, and lost, too, in such a manner. It was enough to blast forever the hopes of the most optimistic Reformer who ever set his foot in the Capital.

CHAPTER XXII

THE course of this history has taken us so far from Sky View and led us into such bitter political conflicts, that it is with a feeling of great satisfaction we return to that country village, the scene of many political conflicts, indeed, but now in summer one of the quietest places in all the world. It was not one of your hustling, bustling towns, with people coming in and going out, and changing its population over night; in fact, it was almost unchanged from what it had been a half century before; and although the railroad carried more people by it in a single day than there were people in all its confines, it caught nothing of the spirit of the busy world beyond, but remained a country town and was not ambitious to be anything else. No place could be found better suited to the needs of a man like Erasmus Dusenbury than this very village where we found Mr. Whittle-

back, and nowhere could be found a man more in contrast to the men with whom we have been dealing, for Mr. Dusenbury was a man of letters. He was always proving something. He claimed to be a scientist; therefore he could take nothing for granted. He had once been a teacher in the village school, but had retired from that occupation to devote the remaining years of his life to the cause of Science. This unusual proceeding had brought him much notoriety among his townsmen, who debated among themselves as to whether he was a little out of his mind or had received an unexpected legacy. He explained it thus: As a teacher he could be of service only to Sky View; as a scientist he would be of service to the world; for he believed that he had discovered a new Law, which he named "The Law of Mutual Attraction," in obedience to which every particle of matter in the universe is continually striving to single out and attach itself to every other particle of the same kind, thus causing the revolution of the earth upon its axis, the growth of plants and trees, the ebbing and flowing of the

tides, in short, all the various changes that are constantly taking place upon this or any other planet. To acquaint the world with the operations of this important Law was the object of his literary labors. He frequently turned aside from his main theme, however, to disprove fallacies which seemed to be continually creeping into the minds of scientific men in other parts of the world. Perhaps he would hear that some scientist of repute was a believer in axioms, and he would immediately set to work to show that brother the error of his way, for axioms Mr. Dusenbury regarded as dangerous shoals in the route of scientific voyagers and would have nothing to do with them. Everything must be proved and nothing assumed, as this taking something for granted and calling it an axiom might lead nobody could tell where.

Spring had come, and the Spirit of the Spring breathed over the earth. Her breath had a mystic power, for flowers and grass appeared everywhere. The bare mountains were filled with verdure and were transformed into a fairy country and a new world of life and living

things. The fields became gardens, the meadows became pastures. Lakes became the center of summer colonies and farm houses were turned into summer hotels. Camping parties pitched their tents by quiet springs or mountain streams under the open sky. Nature was making her call again to the sons of men and they were responding, for she was never disappointing.

Mr. Dusenbury was not one of those who would leave his work even for a brief time to enjoy the beauties about him; he was interested in knowing and proving the why of things. Now when the summer is far advanced see him in his room at the Home Club, a trim, little figure with a kindly face, and eager eyes covered by spectacles, writing away for dear life, chuckling, perhaps, at some proposition he has just demonstrated which will throw consternation among a lot of upstart scientists who are willing to take something for granted. While we are watching him the Club's steward enters and announces a visitor. It is against his rule to receive visitors in the morning, but when

he learns that this visitor is a stranger who has come all the way from England, and is a Captain as well, he relents and consents to receive him.

"I am Captain Berwick," said the stranger, when he was ushered into the room. He was a short, fat little man, with eyes which set too far out of his head, and brown side whiskers. He talked by fits and jerks and had a funny habit of beginning a sentence in a high key and ending it in a low one. "And this is Mr. Dusenbury?" he continued, dropping into the low key.

"Can you prove it, sir?" demanded Mr. Dusenbury, removing his spectacles and looking the Captain over.

Captain Berwick was somewhat taken back by this inquiry, but he quickly recovered himself and replied: "Well now, sir, that shows you are a scientific man, which if I hadn't known before I should know now." This remark so pleased Mr. Dusenbury that he pursued the embarrassing subject no further, but shook hands with his visitor and bade him welcome.

" You're always shaking hands in this country, aren't you? " remarked the Captain in the high key.

" Yes," said Mr. Dusenbury, " we get it from the politicians I guess."

" I'm from England, you know," the Captain announced in the low key.

Captain Berwick had heard much about the great amount of tobacco which was yearly consumed in pipes and cigars by the American people. Convinced of the vast physical harm which in course of time would thereby be done to the citizens of the Republic, he determined to invent something that would greatly lessen it. His knowledge of chemistry and mechanics came to his relief and he at last perfected an instrument which he believed would accomplish his purpose, and only waited a favorable opportunity of introducing it to the American Public. An accommodating relative having died and left him a legacy, he considered it a favorable time to visit America, and here we find him in Sky View, talking to Mr. Dusenbury, as much at home as he ever was in all his life.

"You're a scientist," he continued, without giving Mr. Dusenbury a chance to reply to his last remark; "you've heard of the Royal Society? Well, I'm a friend of the Royal Society."

Having delivered these credentials, which made a profound impression upon his audience, he went on to say that he might be considered somewhat of a scientist himself, for he had a high regard for men of learning; he was just about to relate how he had happened to reach Sky View and hear of Mr. Dusenbury, when that gentleman interrupted him and declared that if the Captain were a scientist it was all very plain, as one scientist would naturally be attracted to another, for according to the Law of Mutual Attraction like objects attracted like, and he thereupon proceeded to explain to the Captain how this Law of Mutual Attraction solved the whole problem of the existence of the universe and explained all the various activities of human life. The Captain proved such an appreciative listener to this discourse that Mr.

Dusenbury declared he was a man after his own heart and invited him to be his guest at the Club for an indefinite time.

CHAPTER XXIII

WAS there ever such a festival as the Poquogg County Fair? It came just at the right time of the year, when the summer's work was done. Then the farmers brought out their big wagons and took their wives and children for a day of merry making. Early in the morning they left their homes from every part of the county, drove along the country roads, laughing, singing, shouting, until at last they came to Gilead and caught sight of the Fair Grounds down in the valley, all decked out with flags and bunting and gay colors of every description.

The Fair lasted a week, but there was always "the best day." The politicians of the last century early saw the advantages which the county fairs afforded for meeting their constituents and discussing political questions.

So "the best day" of a Fair week was "Politician Day," when some well-known politician honored the Fair by his presence.

This is "Whittleback Day" at the Poquogg County Fair; for on this day the Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback, Poquogg County's distinguished citizen, who is soon to represent the county in the State Legislature, is to be present, and is to make a speech. People who have been here on the other days come again to-day, and those who can come but once come to-day. All the county is here, it would seem: Grandfathers and grandmothers; hardy young farmers and their buxom wives; happy young couples strolling arm in arm about the grounds; rollicking children, who spend their pennies at the candy booths and play hide and seek among the crowd; horse jockeys, who hold forth to wondering groups about their favorite steeds. There are pick pockets, who follow in the wake of county fairs; sharpers from the city, who play tricks upon the country lads; strolling players, who play the latest songs and sing them

too; and acrobats, who perform for merry crowds in little tents pitched here and there. All is merriment and Nature seems to smile upon the happy scene. The crowd wander through the building where the exhibits are displayed, admire the prize sheep, handle the great ears of corn and the bright red apples, clap their hands at sight of the massive pumpkins and the big yellow turnips, marvel at the size of the prize pig, and run away when the prize bull begins to bellow and to paw the ground with such a savage air.

But Mr. Whittleback has not come yet.

They ride upon the merry-go-rounds, and dance to the music of the band, drink the lemonade which has the recommendation of having been made in the shade and stirred by an old maid, buy peanuts, candy, cakes and fruit, and then form in groups and eat their dinners while sitting on the ground.

The jockeys bring out their horses and exercise them on the track. And now the crowd rush over to where the jockeys are and praise the horses and their drivers.

But a great shout is heard; Mr. Whittleback is coming at last. All rush to the entrance gate. There comes the big four-seated wagon with its spanking team. The horses are galloping, the band strikes up a lively air and everybody shouts. They all make way, and the horses are brought to a stop right in the crowd. There is Mr. Tubbmann with his great broad-brimmed hat saluting the crowd with a martial air; there is Mr. Whittleback smiling and bowing in all directions; there is Mr. Scouten, and President Costaine, and Mr. Dusenbury, and by Mr. Dusenbury's side, with his eyes fixed upon the crowd and marvelling greatly at it and staring at everybody and everything, sits Captain Berwick, delighted beyond expression at having such a favorable opportunity of introducing his invention to the American people.

No sooner do Mr. Whittleback and his companions alight than the crowd charge up to them, and shake hands with them. Everybody must do himself the honor of shaking hands with Mr. Whittleback. That distinguished

man never received so flattering a reception in all his life, and is kept busy giving hearty hand-shakes in every direction. The crowd bear him and his associates in triumphal procession to the building where the exhibits are displayed and Mr. Whittleback praises everything and everybody. He pats the children on the head and tells them what fine children they are. The prize cows and the prize sheep are the finest he has ever seen, and this is the greatest day he has ever had, which, in truth, it is. Then the crowd bear him over to the stables to see the horses, and Mr. Whittleback shakes hands with the jockeys and tells them it gives him great pleasure to look into their honest faces. The jockeys advise him upon which horses to bet and upon which not to bet. Then the crowd charge up to the Grand Stand and take seats, for now the fun is to begin in earnest.

Mr. Whittleback, Mr. Tubbmann, Mr. Scouten, and a number of other prominent citizens and horsemen, have been selected to act as the judges of the horse races, and so are conducted to the Judges' stand. Upon taking the

seat reserved for him Mr. Whittleback finds sitting next to him the Hon. John L. Whodd, as jolly and red-faced as ever. The Hon. Mr. Whodd gives Mr. Whittleback a hearty hand-shake and informs him, in a whisper, that he has not touched a drop of whiskey since his unfortunate experience at the Capital. "Good," replies Mr. Whittleback, "I'll be blessed if that isn't the best thing I've heard in a long while." Then the jockeys line up their horses and the Official Starter calls the first race. The horses start and everybody cheers. The jockeys and horses do their best. The four horses are even. They continue even and cross the line almost even. Everybody shouts, the band begins to play, and the first race is over. But the money does not change hands; no one is satisfied; no one will hand over. There is a fight and the crowd take sides. Policeman Rafferty, who has been imported to maintain order, rushes forward, charges the combatants, and knocks them to the ground. It is all over, and the crowd resume their seats. The next race gives better satisfaction; there is no doubt

about who is the winner this time and everybody is happy except the men who lose their bets.

There is an intermission before the next race begins. The band plays and the people talk and laugh and eat more peanuts and drink more soda water. Mr. Scouten informs Mr. Whittleback that they had better come down-stairs, for there are some voters who desire to meet him, and that any way they must mix among the people.

As soon as Mr. Whittleback and Mr. Scouten make their appearance on the other side of the track where the crowd were, they were beset by a great number of people who desired to be introduced. Here was a good Republican, Mr. Scouten declared, shaking hands with him, who had always been a Republican; yes, and he always would be a Republican, the man declared, as he shook hands with Mr. Whittleback, as long as the Republican Party had in it such men as Mr. Whittleback. Here was another man who had until lately been a Demo-

crat, but had never been able to get anything from that Party, and so had suddenly been so touched by the public sacrifices of Mr. Whittleback that he had come into the Republican Party, and now inquired if Mr. Whittleback could not get him a pass to Niagara Falls. Here was another who was always looking for an easy job, and who now asked Mr. Whittleback to get him such a job, for he had always voted the Republican ticket, but had never gotten anything except a few passes. Here was another who had been the bane of every politician for the last thirty years, for he had the misfortune always to have a relative to be provided for, and he now asked Mr. Whittleback to get a job for his daughter's husband, who, following the example of his father-in-law, always voted the Republican ticket and was the father of five sons, each of whom when he came of age would vote the Republican ticket. To all these and many, many more, whose great recommendation was that they always voted the Republican ticket, Mr. Whittleback gave hearty handshakes and assurances that he was de-

lighted to see them and would certainly do all in his power to carry out their wishes, and even patted some of them on the back.

Suddenly a rough looking man who carried a cane and wore large spectacles edged his way through the crowd.

"You're a Reformer?" he inquired of Mr. Whittleback.

"Yes."

"You're a Republican, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, I don't belong to either Party."

"But you're going to vote for Mr. Whittleback when he is nominated, aren't you?" inquired Mr. Scouten, giving him a hearty handshake.

"No, sir," replied the stranger, "I never vote, sir. I'm disgusted with both Parties, sir; and if you knew as much about 'em as I do," he continued, shaking his fist at Mr. Whittleback, "you wouldn't vote either."

"You might better get in and fight to make things better," exclaimed Mr. Whittleback, his anger rising.

"What good would that do?" asked the man.

"You'd be doing your duty for one thing," retorted Mr. Whittleback, "and when enough men get in the fight to make things better they'll be better."

This doctrine evidently did not please the stranger, for he disappeared as suddenly as he had come.

Hardly had Mr. Whittleback recovered from this attack, when Mrs. Diggin came pushing her way through the crowd right up to him. She had just finished delivering a temperance lecture in the Exhibition Building, and now demanded in very peremptory tones that he stop the sale of whiskey on the Fair Grounds.

That whiskey was being sold on the Fair Grounds was shown by the fact that Mrs. Diggin had no sooner made her demand than up came Alderman Whitfield Satterley in that condition which is commonly designated as "feeling good."

"You ran away from me, didn't you?" he exclaimed, addressing Mr. Whittleback. "But

I found you out, Honorable, didn't I? And this lady here," he continued, turning to Mrs. Diggin and holding out his hand, which she did not take—"I'm not an Honorable, Madam," he explained, still holding out his hand, "but I'm one of the plain people and"—after a pause, with a great deal of emphasis—"free-and-independent! Glad to meet you, Madam," he continued, after Mrs. Diggin had at last consented to shake hands with him; "let me introduce you to the Honorable."

"There, sir," interposed Mrs. Diggin, addressing Mr. Whittleback, "look at him!" Mr. Satterley presented a sorry spectacle, being rather unsteady on his legs. "You now have positive evidence, sir, that what I have said is true, and it's a disgrace to the country!"

"You don't meantersay, do you, Madam, nor the Honorable here, that I ain't free-and-independent! We're all free-and-independent. Three cheers for liberty and freedom!" Mr. Satterley threw up his hands, but quickly brought them down again, for this sudden

movement had nearly thrown him to the ground.

By this time a large crowd had begun to collect around the actors in this scene — for it possessed the advantage of being a free exhibition — and Mr. Scouten and Mr. Whittleback beat a hasty retreat, leaving Mr. Satterley holding forth to the crowd on freedom and independence, much to everybody's amusement but very little to their edification. Before he had concluded, Mrs. Diggin began to deliver her lecture on "The Practical Effects of Whiskey on the Human Organism," which had the unfortunate effect of causing the crowd to depart hastily, leaving both speakers, much to the disgust of each, without an audience.

While Mr. Whittleback was holding his court, Mr. Dusenbury and Captain Berwick made a tour of the Fair Grounds in the interest of the Captain's invention. Mr. Dusenbury conducted his guest to the different booths where several ingenious Yankees were exhibiting their inventions. One sold a horse medicine guar-

anted to put enough life into any horse, no matter how far gone, to enable the owner to sell him to another party, which medicine would be sold exclusively in Poquogg County at the ridiculously low price of one dollar per bottle. Another was happy to be able to give them the opportunity of buying very remarkable eye-glasses that would enable a person to see as well in the night as in the day, and of which thousands of pairs were being sold daily all over the country, simply because the people knew a good thing when they saw it. There had been many inventions for milking cows, a third declared to the crowd which surrounded him, but they had never been successful because they had gone on the wrong principle. He held up before them the only real practical cow milker that had ever been invented. Thousands of dollars had been spent to perfect it. It was a small instrument, to be sure, but it worked by suction and was the greatest invention of the age; only seventy-five cents. "Think of it, gentlemen, only seventy-five cents." Another of these inventive geniuses held up a small bot-

tle in sight of his audience and demanded to know why the brush grew on their farms. Simply because they did not use what was in that bottle. Brown's Brush Exterminator, if sprinkled over the brush stumps, would prevent the brush from ever growing up again. "Right this way, gentlemen, save hundreds of dollars, Brown's Brush Exterminator will do the business, only forty-nine cents a bottle." Some of the people did step up, but others did not step up, and some took it as a good joke, but Captain Berwick was much encouraged and every minute became more firmly convinced that all he needed to do was to place his invention before the Public and it would be a great success. Having come to this conclusion, which he at once communicated to Mr. Dusenbury, they set out to find the rest of their party, from whom they had now been separated for some time. They were soon met by a stranger who introduced himself to Mr. Dusenbury as Prof. Muggsgrave, a brother scientist. The Professor had long been engaged in an elaborate speculation on how long it would take the world

to go back to its primeval state if all its inhabitants should suddenly be swept out of existence. He had embodied his conclusions on this interesting subject in an exhaustive manuscript, which would undoubtedly have brought him world-wide fame, if he had not had the singular misfortune of never getting it published. Mr. Dusenbury and the Professor immediately fell into a profound discussion of the latter's work, and their acquaintance was fast ripening into friendship,— much to Captain Berwick's mortification,— when the Professor took the unfortunate step of avowing himself a believer in axioms, whereupon Mr. Dusenbury burst into a great rage and immediately left him in high dudgeon, at the same time declaring that any man who believed in axioms was unfit to be a devotee of Science, and that the Professor furnished a striking proof of the doctrine of *nemo sine insanitate quadam.*

A man who had been an interested listener to this discussion now stepped up and said he saw they were scientific gentlemen; that being the case, he would like to show them something

he had just seen which he considered very remarkable; would they object? Mr. Dusenbury would not object if it was to be of service to a scientific man. The stranger then led them to a small crowd which had gathered about a man who was shuffling cards. "This man does something I don't understand," the stranger continued; "I should like to have you explain it." The man with the cards inquired which of the gentlemen would take a chance. The stranger said he would. It cost a dollar. The stranger laid down a dollar. The man then displayed three cards marked 1, 2 and 3. "Which card do you choose, sir?" "Number 3." "All right, sir. Gentlemen, watch me," and he proceeded to pass the cards through his hands very slowly. "Watch card Number 3." All kept their eyes fixed on card Number 3. Suddenly the man stopped and asked the stranger to pick out card Number 3. He did so. It was Number 4.

"A very strange thing," exclaimed Mr. Dusenbury, putting on his spectacles and looking at the cards, that were now handed to him.

"Want to try it yourself?" suggested the owner of the cards. Yes, Mr. Dusenbury would try it. He could not try it without putting down his dollar, though. Well, Mr. Dusenbury would put down his dollar. What card would he choose? Mr. Dusenbury chose Number 2. The man told him to watch Number 2 carefully, while he shuffled the cards slowly through his hands. Suddenly he stopped and asked Mr. Dusenbury to pick out Number 2. If he picked out Number 2 he should have his dollar back and another dollar also. If he did not, he lost his dollar. Mr. Dusenbury picked out the card he had been following all the while — it was Number 1.

"A very strange thing, Mr. Berwick," he exclaimed, to which the Captain readily agreed, whereupon the man with the cards asked the Captain if he did not wish to try his luck. The Captain did, but he objected to putting down the dollar. It being clearly a case where a question of Science was involved, Mr. Dusenbury put down the dollar and the Captain picked out card Number 1. They all followed

it closely with their eyes as the man passed the cards through his hands again, but when he stopped and the Captain was requested to pick it out, instead of being Number 1 it was Number 2.

"I declare that is a very strange thing, Mr. Berwick," repeated Mr. Dusenbury.

Captain Berwick suggested tricks.

"That's what some scientists would call a phenomenon, sir," remarked Mr. Dusenbury. "A lot of ill-begotten scientists, when they're too lazy to prove a thing, will call it a phenomenon, sir," and he was about to explain his invariable rule of always demonstrating a proposition when their attention was attracted to another quarter.

Everybody is shouting and running toward the speakers' platform. It is in front of the Grand Stand. There are some distinguished men upon it. They are the representatives of the Public. The Hon. John L. Whodd represents the Public in the Assembly. Jerome Alexander Tubbmann stands for the dignity of

the Bar. The Hon. Henrick Scouten represents the Republican Organization of Poquogg County, which has arrayed itself so magnificently against the enemies of liberty. The Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback, the greatest of them all, represents the Reform Movement, not only in Poquogg County, but throughout the country. What a distinction it is to be upon this platform! How mothers hold up their children to see the "Honorable" and hope that when the children grow up they will get as high in the world.

Mr. Scouten comes to the front of the platform, the band stops playing, and everybody shouts and cheers. Mr. Scouten says he is glad to be present. He is also glad to see them all so prosperous. There was a time when they were not so prosperous. Who had charge of the government at that time? The Democratic Party. The Public, disgusted with the Democratic Party, wisely put the Republican Party in power, and what was the result? Good times, prosperity, plenty of money.

"Are you going to keep the Republican

Party in power and have these good times continue, gentlemen? Or are you going to put the Democratic Party in and let the country go to the dogs?"

Cries of, "No, not a bit of it!"

"I don't believe you are. I have confidence in the people. I believe that when election comes this fall you are going to the polls and you are going to say: Prosperity and the Republican Party."

Great applause.

"But I did not come here to make a political speech," Mr. Scouten continues, "I came here to rejoice at your prosperity as shown by your splendid exhibits. So I am going to present to you one who needs no introduction, for you all know him and love him, the Hon. John L. Whodd, your representative in the Assembly."

The Hon. Mr. Whodd, by spending most of his time at the Capital, and by giving evidence of great good fellowship when in Poquogg County, as well as by the lavish distribution of passes, has become a very popular representative and has won the reputation of being an

able statesman. He is greeted with vociferous applause as he comes to the front of the platform and bows and smiles at everybody.

"Ladies and gentlemen," began the Hon. Mr. Whodd, "I have had one of the best times to-day I ever had in my life." Great applause. "Yes, my friends, there's nothing like getting back home among your own people. And I want to say right here that we have got the best county in the world. Everything here is the best. You have the best horses and the best cows, you have the best cider and the best potatoes, and so I say I'm glad to come back to old Poquogg county." Laughter and applause. "And right here I want to say a word about your politics and your politicians. I know a whole lot of politicians, and I say the best politicians on earth are produced right here in our county." Great applause. "And the best part of it is you're all Republicans."

Here some enthusiastic Republicans jumped to their feet, waved their hands and shouted,

"Hurrah for Whodd!" "Three cheers for Whodd!" until they were hoarse.

"Now my friends," the Hon. Mr. Whodd continued, "we're going to have an election this fall; and I want to ask you why you should support the Republican Party. You young ladies and gentlemen"—smiling at the younger element in the audience—"you're the best looking people on earth." Laughter and applause. "And you're good looking because your fathers and mothers were good looking before you." More applause. "Why, ladies," the Hon. Mr. Whodd continued, "I'm good looking myself!" Cries of, "Good, Good," from the women, while the men nodded their heads and observed that Whodd was at his best. "But all the people of this State, my friends, are not as good looking as you are. So one of my personal friends, the representative from our adjoining District—and a good Republican!"—cries of "Bully for him!"—"introduced a Bill at the last session which authorized the appointment of a Commission to inquire into the reason why there aren't more

good looking people in this State in proportion to the population. A Republican Legislature passed that Bill and appropriated \$25,000 for the use of that Commission; the Hon. Silas Grabb is its chairman, and that Commission will report ways and means to the next Legislature to remedy this unfortunate condition. And I say that the Republican Party by this act alone has shown itself vitally interested in the welfare of the people of this State and deserves your support at the polls." Great applause.

"There is another matter to which I want to call your attention," the Hon. Mr. Whodd continued. "In some sections of the State unscrupulous politicians were usurping the rights of the people and were putting into office incompetent men. And they were keeping them in. A bad condition to exist in a free State. But there is a man among you who has ~~t~~ courage and the genius of a true statesman. ~~t~~ came to the Capital with a Bill giving the people the right to vote any office holder out of office as soon as it is apparent he is unfit for any reason longer to continue in office. One

of the greatest pieces of legislation proposed in recent years. I was Chairman of the Committee to which that Bill was referred. We reported it favorably, but it was beaten on the floor of the House." Hisses and cries of "Shame." "You know the man to whom I refer. He is the Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback, Poquogg County's latest contribution to the great men of the State—and a good Republican!" Tremendous applause. "This year he is to run for the Assembly, and a vote for him means a vote for Reform and for an able, honest man." More applause. "And if you will send me to the Senate I will do all in my power to help along the good work." Applause and cries of, "We will, we will."

The Hon. Mr. Whodd, having now exhausted his arguments in favor of his Party, declared himself to be one of the plain people and opposed to the railroads and all corporations and promised to fight them to the last ditch in their attacks upon the Public. He then congratulated the Republicans present upon their leader, Mr. Scouten, predicted Republi-

can success at the polls in November, and finished by leading the crowd in giving three mighty cheers for Mr. Whittleback.

The applause was so loud and so many admirers were shouting Mr. Whittleback's name and demanding a speech that Mr. Scouten could not make a speech in introducing him, so he simply escorted him to the front of the platform and left him to face the crowd alone.

"Great men are modest," says the proverb. Mr. Whittleback's modesty on this occasion took the form of extreme nervousness. There were a thousand yelling, cheering, admiring men and women before him, who expected great things of him in the way of a speech. Fortunately, the demonstration kept up so long that when it had subsided Mr. Whittleback had regained his composure sufficiently to begin speaking.

"My friends," he exclaimed, "I stand for principles." Applause. "A great many people say the clothes a man wears show what kind of a man he is." Cries of, "That's right." "It may be right; but I say a man's principles

show what he is a good deal more than his clothes do." Another outburst of applause. "But because I represent principles isn't to say that I can't represent people." Cries of, "That's right." "It doesn't say that I can't represent you people. I will represent you people." Great applause and cries of, "We know you will." "You've heard me spoken of, perhaps, as a politician. I'm not a politician, my friends, I'm a Reformer." More applause. "The way I size up some of these politicians is this way: They're in the Public's service for what they can get out of it. A Reformer is a man who believes he ought to be as honest with the Public's business as he is with his own." Tremendous applause. "You usually need a Reformer wherever there's a politician." Laughter and applause. "I believe public office is a contract between the people and the men they elect; and whenever any office holders do not serve the people, the people should have the right to vote them out of office and vote them out at once at a special election called for that purpose. But they

can't do that now. We went to the Capital last spring with a Bill which gave the people of every municipality and township in this State the right to do this very thing. That Bill was not passed. I will not tell you why it was not passed, but I will tell you who was against it: Every political scalawag who is afraid of the people, every office holder who is holding public office for what he can get out of it. When those people are against a Bill," Mr. Whittleback exclaimed, "it shows it's a pretty good Bill." Another outburst of applause by the audience, and those on the platform nodded their heads to one another and remarked they hadn't thought it was in him. "If employers of labor will not protect their workmen," continued Mr. Whittleback, "I say make them do it. If these corporations you give franchises to don't do their duty and serve you, I say make them do it, or take their franchises away from them. We don't give them franchises to pay big dividends but to serve us. And why shouldn't you have a right to terminate your contract with any office holder who breaks his

contract and doesn't do his duty and doesn't represent you?" Mr. Whittleback shouted, warming up to his subject. "Shouldn't the people have that right in a free country?"

This proved to be a happy thrust. Such a demonstration Mr. Whittleback had never before seen in all his life. The audience jumped to their feet and shouted and waved their hands and cried: "What's the matter with Whittleback?" and answered: "He's all right." Rival admirers vied with one another in seeing who could shout his name loudest. Flags and handkerchiefs were waved and men threw their hats in the air without realizing what they were doing. Here was the man about whom they had heard so much, a man who was not afraid to fight the people's cause; here he was before them telling them what he believed and what he had tried to do. He was right. His Bill was a good one. He was a hero. They would hardly let him finish his speech. He told them to keep up the fight, that it was their fight, and that every honest citizen should get into it. He told them he would introduce the Bill at the

next session if they would send him to the Assembly, and then they began another demonstration. Just how the speech ended Mr. Whittleback could never remember. He tried to thank them for their generous expressions of approval, but no one heard him. It was the greatest ovation any speaker had ever before received in Poquogg County.

The Public having been sufficiently informed of what was being done for its benefit by its servants, some exhibitions were given for its amusement. A very tall man with a very large head proceeded to walk across a wire suspended from two poles at an unsafe distance from the ground, which feat having been accomplished, he made a bed upon the wire and went to sleep, and upon waking and acting as though he had slept a long, long time, he became so happy that he danced a jig and sang a comic song. A man with five small dogs did his part toward amusing the crowd by making the dogs run up a ladder and drop into a bag, dance, wrestle and jump over sticks. Then a little man piled

chairs upon his chin and suspended weights from it and balanced brooms upright on it.

Mr. Whittleback was deprived of the pleasure of watching these performances, for no sooner was the speech making over than all those who had been introduced to him and many others rushed up to him, shook hands with him and congratulated him upon his speech; and the newcomers told him their troubles and what good Republicans they had been, that they had never gotten anything, and asked him to make an exception in their case and put them in positions where they would get good salaries with not much to do.

The day was drawing to a close. It would soon be time for the balloon ascension, and Captain Berwick was making no progress with the advertisement of his invention. There seemed to be no opportunity to secure the attention of the crowd. So he consulted Mr. Dusenbury. Mr. Dusenbury disappeared suddenly and returned in a few minutes with an empty box which he placed on the ground and ex-

claimed: "There, Mr. Berwick, let's get on this." Mr. Dusenbury and the Captain ascended the box. "My friends," Mr. Dusenbury shouted, "listen. This gentleman beside me is my friend from England; a scientist —"

"And a friend of the Royal Society," whispered the Captain.

"And a Friend of the Royal Society," Mr. Dusenbury continued. "He's got something to say to you. Listen a minute."

Cries of, "Listen to the Englishman," came from the crowd, and, "He's a Scientist, ha, ha!"

Captain Berwick then proceeded with his speech. Whether because of nervousness or weariness he spoke in such low tones that only those standing very near the box could hear him. An obtrusive youth, who smoked a very large cigar and wore his hat on the side of his head, took upon himself the office of repeating the speech to the rest of the crowd. This did not at all tend to allay the Captain's embarrassment.

"His name's Berwick," said the Repeater.

"Comes from England. Heard a lot about how much we smoke. Says tobacco poisons people who smoke it. Thought he'd invent something to put on cigars and pipes to keep the poison from going into our mouths."

Laughter. "Draws the smoke through a screen that absorbs the poison. A kind of smoke strainer." Everybody wondered whether the Captain was in earnest, but finally concluded he was. Increased laughter and nodding of heads. "There it is," continued the Repeater, as the Captain held up what looked like a cigar holder to the gaze of the crowd, and fastened it to a cigar, "the Harmless Smoker. Twenty-five cents."

"Pass it around and let's see it," suggested the Repeater. With this request the Captain readily complied. "No fun in smoking a cigar with a thing like that on it," contemptuously declared the Repeater, passing it on among the crowd. "Twenty-five cents for that?" exclaimed another man. "I'll bet a cigar wouldn't draw through it any way." "Nothing but a common cigar holder," remarked another, judg-

ing from the outside appearance only, and not examining the Harmless Smoker's interior. "He might have been better set to work," was the verdict of a fourth, and so on until it reached a tall, swarthy countryman standing at the edge of the crowd, who calmly put it in his pocket and started off with it. Captain Berwick immediately set out in hot pursuit, but was much impeded by running into fat women and stumbling over children and running against men who were unsteady on their legs, and was in fact stopped short several times by challenges to personal combat, so that he was at last compelled to give up the chase and return to Mr. Dusenbury. As the matter had now entered the domain of the law, Mr. Dusenbury advised a consultation with Mr. Tubbmann. They found that distinguished member of the Bar standing on the front steps of the Grand Stand.

"Pull out another one and show 'em that," said Mr. Tubbmann, after Mr. Dusenbury had stated the case.

"He hasn't got another one," replied Mr. Dusenbury.

"Came all the way over from England and brought only one with him?"

Such was indeed the fact.

"Well, go back and get another one, then. We have a Fair here every year."

The last great event of this great day was the balloon ascension. The balloon had been on exhibition all day in the open space between the tracks. It had been much admired by the crowd, but when the man in charge announced that the ascension would take place, no one volunteered to accompany him. At length, Mr. Dusenbury, who had read somewhere about the effect of higher altitudes on animal life, came forward and announced that he would volunteer. Willing hands helped him into the basket and all was in readiness when Mr. Dusenbury declared that he must have some animal to take up with him, for he was going up in the interests of Science and a cat or a dog must be taken along to witness the effect of the higher altitude upon it. Captain Berwick suggested a cat as taking up less room and Mr. Dusenbury said a cat

would do. After some delay the prize cat was brought and deposited in Mr. Dusenbury's arms, the balloon's fastenings were released and it shot upward amid shouts of applause, Mr. Dusenbury holding on to the cat with one hand and to the basket with the other.

The most noticeable effect of the increased altitude on the cat was to cause that animal to bite and scratch with great vigor, while Mr. Dusenbury held on with the tenacity of a martyr, knowing the importance of the experiment, but before the balloon had ascended fifty yards the cat proved too much for him, and he was fain to let go his hold, with the result that the cat sprang out of the basket and came down in the midst of the crowd below, striking upon the head of Alderman Satterley, who happened to come up at the opportune moment. Being in no condition to comprehend this phenomenon, that gentleman spent the rest of the day in trying to find out what it was, in which effort, however, he had very indifferent success.

"Better stand back, gentlemen," remarked

Mr. Tubbmann, "he'll be coming down himself next."

As this seemed not at all improbable, the crowd made haste to stand back, notwithstanding the suggestion of the Repeater (who had by this time started on another cigar) that they would be of service in breaking Mr. Dusenbury's fall.

It soon became evident that there was some possibility at least of Mr. Tubbmann's prophecy being fulfilled, for the rope that held the balloon and limited the height of its ascent gave way. Great excitement prevailed. Women screamed and declared Mr. Dusenbury would be killed and the men gravely nodded their heads and recalled that they had predicted something of the sort would happen. The children laughed and clapped their hands, for which their parents, partly for their correction and partly to relieve their own feelings, soundly whipped them. In the height of the excitement some one discovered that the balloon was descending. Down it came, and the farther

down it came the higher Mr. Dusenbury's spirits rose, until, when objects assumed their accustomed size, he began to wonder whether the cat's actions were due to the higher altitude or the natural timidity of its race. As soon as the crowd saw Mr. Dusenbury was safe, they took no further interest in him, but immediately began to make preparations for going home. They followed Mr. Whittleback and his companions to the entrance gate, loudly demanded what was the matter with him, as loudly answered that he was all right, gave three hearty cheers for him, and while this demonstration was going on, the horses started, the hero was borne away smiling and bowing, and "Whittleback Day" was over.

CHAPTER XXIV

MR. WHITTLEBACK was now at the pinnacle of his fame. Unlike the good knights of the olden time, who, after they had laid siege to the hearts of their fair ladies, found their labors ended when the fair ones had capitulated, Mr. Whittleback discovered that after siege had been laid to the heart of the Public and the Public had capitulated his labors had only begun. His time was now taken up with listening to all sorts of complaints from all sorts of people. The representatives of several women's Societies, who took upon themselves the duty of looking after the Public's morals, were very anxious to know whether he smoked or drank anything and whether he attended church regularly; and such was their persistency that Mr. Whittleback was obliged to attend church on several occasions in order to appease them. Men for whom the Public had never done anything took the liberty of ask-

ing him — as the representative of the Public — to help them with a little money. Men who had always helped the Public by voting the Republican ticket asked him, as the Public's representative, to reciprocate and give them passes on the railroad. A Reformer surely could not refuse to help the cause of humanity. Would he kindly contribute, therefore, to the Society for the Care of Worn-out Peddlers, to the Association to Promote the Revival of Literary Taste in Asia, and to the Society for the Extermination of Potato Bugs?

The Public now adopted a unique method of honoring its distinguished servant, for great numbers of fond parents began to name their male offspring after him, and to such an extent was this carried, that as hundreds of little Nathaniel Whittlebacks appeared in all parts of the country, Mr. Whittleback began to believe that even if his work as a Reformer should ever be forgotten — may the Spirit of Liberty save us from such a catastrophe! — his name and memory would still be preserved to posterity by these living memorials.

The Reform Movement was making rapid progress. Mr. Whittleback's fight to restore representative government in his own State and his new ideal of public service were becoming known throughout America. The press spread far and wide the news of a new light that had arisen upon the political horizon, a man who, living in a country town of a rural county, had pointed out a way by which the people could win from the political bosses their lost power, who believed that every corporation the public created existed, not to pay big dividends, but to serve the people, and that if public servants did not do their duty they should be voted out of office at once. The hardy farmers of New England read with burning indignation of the tyranny of the political leaders and the treason of legislators. The new ideals of public service spread among the people of the Middle States, and on to the great West, whose citizens were to have such a conspicuous part in The Second American Conflict. Men who had found their homes upon the prairies shut their doors against the cold winds that blew across the

plains, and surrounded by their families, took their seats before the blazing fires on wintry nights and read of the plan to free the People from the domination of the Bosses. Up among the lumber camps in the great forests, where the papers went but on rare occasions, Mr. Whittleback's portraits, sometimes much disfigured by dirt and rough usage, were eagerly scanned by hardy lumbermen, who spelled out the articles on Reform and the way to restore representative government. And the men who lived on the Pacific coast, descendants of the pioneers of early days, read with eagerness of the fight a man in the East had made against the tyranny of the political bosses, and of his new creed for the citizen, and longed to get into the fight with him.

Thus were the seeds of reform sown in honest soil, and thus did the new political ideals get into the minds of the masses, needing only time and opportunity to be translated into deeds.

CHAPTER XXV

“POLITICAL parties are business organizations. Their dividends are offices.”

The speaker was Mr. Scouten. He and Mr. Whittleback were holding a private audience in the Post Office. The primaries for the Assembly Convention were to be held in a week and Mr. Scouten had been telling his distinguished friend how necessary it was that none but “Organization” men be elected as delegates. As there was considerable expense attached to holding the primaries and the succeeding convention, and as Mr. Whittleback was to be nominated at that convention for Member of Assembly, it was necessary, according to the rules of The Organization, that he then and there pledge his contribution for the fall campaign. “For Politics,” said Mr. Scouten, “being a business proposition, a man should not

expect to get something without paying for it, any more than he would in any other business."

"Do you mean that I must promise now to contribute to the expense of the election this fall?" inquired Mr. Whittleback.

"That has been the rule of The Organization in this county for many years. That pledge must be made before the primaries."

"Suppose I don't promise?"

"You won't be nominated."

"Suppose I promise and don't pay?"

"Then we'll defeat you."

"How much must I pledge?"

"The amount the candidate for Member of Assembly has always been assessed is one thousand dollars."

"Well I'll be blessed!" exclaimed Mr. Whittleback, in bewilderment. "The salary is only fifteen hundred dollars."

"True," replied Mr. Scouten with complacency, "but don't forget what I said a moment ago: Political parties are business organizations. You won't lose anything. Goodfellow saw you at the Capital, didn't he?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Whittleback, "Good-fellow told me the corporations and the railroads would make a contribution of three thousand dollars to my campaign fund. I told him I didn't want it and wouldn't take it."

"Well, that stumps me!" exclaimed Mr. Scouten, who was never so thunderstruck in all his political experience.

"What business have they got to pay me three thousand dollars?" interposed Mr. Whittleback. "If I took that money they would expect me to represent them. I'm going to the Legislature to represent the people, or I'm not going. There are enough legislators at the Capital now who are representing everybody else but the people."

"Yes," assented Mr. Scouten, who could not fail to recognize the truth of this remark, "but listen: No sooner will you be nominated than the people will be after you for money and passes and positions, and when you get to the Capital they'll come there and live on you at your hotel, and you'll have to feed 'em and treat 'em and take 'em around. Why, it costs

Whodd a couple of thousand a year for this sort of thing alone. Hasn't he got to get it back? The people expect him to get it back and they don't care how. It will cost Whodd five thousand dollars to be elected to the Senate this fall."

"Who supplies that money?"

"The railroads and other business corporations that want to get laws passed."

"And who gets the money?"

"Well," laughed Mr. Scouten, "The Organization gets a good share. We aren't running Parties for our health, Mr. Whittleback. Don't forget that political parties are business organizations. At election time we pay dividends to the preferred stockholders."

"And is this true all over the country?" asked Mr. Whittleback with open-mouthed wonder.

"Yes."

"And with the Democrats as well as the Republicans?"

"Yes, they have the same system."

"Where do the people come in?"

"The people! Half of 'em won't vote unless they're paid. A third of 'em won't vote at all. They've got as good an administration of the government as they deserve. There's no reason why the men who run the Public's affairs and submit to the Public's annoyance and criticism and abuse shouldn't be paid for it. What have you got out of public life so far, Mr. Whittleback? Some praise, to be sure, but more criticism and annoyance. It has cost you money and taken your time. The people would forget it all to-morrow; but The Organization never forgets. We take care of our own. We don't let the Public be unfair. We recompense. If the Public defeats our candidate, we give him an appointive office. Take my advice, Mr. Whittleback: Never forsake The Organization for the people."

"What I can't understand," Mr. Whittleback interposed with earnestness, "is why the people will let a few men have control of their affairs."

"It's because they don't think. As long as everything goes all right and times are good, the people don't stop to think about Politics

and how we get our money or why we can afford to spend so much to elect our candidates. They don't realize they're footing all the bills."

Here was Mr. Whittleback, capable and honest, willing and anxious to serve the Public, and yet he could not do so without paying a group of politicians one thousand dollars for the privilege of being nominated.

Perhaps Mr. Scouten divined something of what was in his mind, for he went to a government safe standing in one corner of the room and taking out a large book handed it to him.

"There, Mr. Whittleback, look at that. Here's one thing we do. Suppose you turn to page seventy-five; what do you find there?"

"A long list of names."

"Read the first name at the top of the page."

"Soper, Andrew. Town of Marshall. Democrat by heredity. Son of Big Jim Soper. Votes as paid. Price \$3.'"

"Suppose you come over to the B's, Mr. Whittleback."

"Barnham,'" replied Mr. Whittleback, beginning at the top of the page, "' William.

Gilead. Employed by Railroad. Republican.
Votes as Railroad tells him.' "

"Now take the L's, Mr. Whittleback,
page sixty."

"Leman, Jake. Farmer. Town of Mutton Hollow: Democrat when sober, Republican when drunk. Looked after on election day by Lieutenant Sandbag.' "

"Exactly," said Mr. Scouten, when Mr. Whittleback had finished with Mr. Leman. "This book contains the names of every voter in Poquogg County. Talk about the church having an organization! Why, they don't compare with us for organizing and finding out things and keeping in touch with men, for we have lieutenants in every district, and the United States is divided into thousands of districts, and in every district there is just such a book as this. We know just what every man's politics is and what his price is and everything about how to reach him. We get voters positions, we help them when they are sick, we clothe their families if necessary, give them offices and honors, and in return they vote our

ticket. But it takes money to do all that, Mr. Whittleback."

"I'll be blessed if I shouldn't think it would, Mr. Scouten."

"A man in Politics, Mr. Whittleback, has the alternative of spending money or getting out."

Mr. Whittleback's personal inclination was to get out then and there, but his desire to serve the people was strong within him still. Although he had seen something of political life, that which Mr. Scouten had just said was a revelation to him. Could it be true? Mr. Scouten seemed to be very sure about it. If it were true, Mr. Whittleback felt that it was wrong; his whole nature rebelled against such a condition in a free country. He had a great longing to change it all, to free the Public from the domination of the political Bosses and to restore to the people that representative government about which Mr. Tubbmann had spoken so eloquently and which he declared mankind had earned by long years of suffering for liberty. He would go on if it cost him ten

times one thousand dollars, for he could do nothing for the Public by stopping now. So he pledged the one thousand dollars to the Poquogg County Republican Organization, but his indignation was so great that he could not refrain from saying:

“ But some day, Mr. Scouten, a change will come; men will go into public life with the hope only of serving the people; their service to the Public will be their only title to fame; those men will drive the corporation agents from Politics and their lobbyists from the Capitals, and representative government will be restored! ”

“ Perhaps,” laughed Mr. Scouten; “ but that is a long way off, Mr. Whittleback, and we are living in the present.”

CHAPTER XXVI

A MILE or so from Sky View, on a broad plateau which commanded miles and miles of the surrounding country, stood Fairfield Mansion House. It was one of many similar mansions which had been erected in that fashionable locality where men of great wealth had laid out large tracts of land in great estates, with lakes and parks, and, emulating the barons of feudal times, had even built magnificent castles upon the mountain peaks. The owner of the Fairfield Mansion was Dudley Fairfield, a young man of eight and twenty, who was one of the "Class." He belonged to the aristocracy. The elder Fairfield, since deceased, had made his fortune by cornering flour, an act, which, although it resulted in great distress and starvation among thousands of poor families, gave him and his family a foremost place in the ranks of the aristocratic circle. He then purchased a tract of land on the outskirts of Sky

View and devoted his last years to laying out his estate. To him belonged the distinction of making a crusade among the rich to establish the custom of inscribing the amount of one's wealth upon his tombstone. In this crusade, however, he was unsuccessful, which fact he did not cease to lament to his dying day. His only child, Dudley, had greatly enraged him and shocked the aristocratic circle by falling in love while at college with a girl of rare beauty and much intelligence, but who gave mortal offence to the "Class" by belonging to a family in moderate circumstances. On this occasion, however, Dudley displayed resolution and determination — the only time in his life — and married the girl in spite of all opposition. The dishonor thus brought upon his family, together with the failure of his crusade in the matter of the tombstones, so preyed upon the elder Fairfield's mind that he sank into an early grave, but not before he had forgiven Dudley and appeased Society by making that young gentleman's inheritance less by one-third than it would have been had he obeyed his father.

Dudley himself evinced little liking for any society but that of dogs and horses, but he was the best hunter in all those parts, and his advice upon all matters of sport was much in demand. He was a tall, dark-complexioned youth, with a haughty air. He spoke a little French and a little German, read a little Italian, and had once written a love song in Latin. He was, however, too English in his tastes to be popular, and was better acquainted with English horses and English sports than with the rise of the Republican Party or the causes of the Civil War. His horses had short tails, and he drove through the country in a great tally-ho, whose approach was heralded by the blasts from an English hunting horn. Of course, there were no titles and his family could have no coat of arms, but it was not his fault that he was born in America; so he managed to get along the best he could, associating only with his own Class, and avoiding the "common people," for whom he had little sympathy and much contempt.

Upon the evening when our readers are privileged to meet him for the first time he and

Mrs. Fairfield were sitting in the library of the Mansion House. Mr. Fairfield was holding his favorite dog, a little poodle, while Mrs. Fairfield was reading from "English Sports in the Eighteenth Century." The famous fox hunter, Sir Harry Radcliffe, had just left his companions in the rear and bade fair to reach the fox in a short time, when a servant entered and announced that a gentleman was below.

Mr. Fairfield bade the servant wait until Sir Harry had caught the fox, and when that feat was accomplished he ordered him to show the gentleman up.

To the vigorous barking of the poodle the Hon. Henrick Scouten entered, beaming his blandest smile and holding out his hand for the hearty handshake.

"Let me introduce you to Mrs. Fairfield," said Mr. Fairfield. "My dear, this is the man who knows all about Politics."

"I am honored," said Mr. Scouten.

"And now let me present Mr. Poofru," Mr. Fairfield continued, "the greatest poodle in the

United States, or England either. Poofru, say good evening."

"Bow, wow," said Poofru, with two haughty little barks.

"Poofru, you must show the gentleman your tricks."

So saying, Mr. Fairfield put Poofru upon the floor and tried to induce him to show the tricks, the first of which was to jump over his master's hand. The little animal's attention was too much occupied with Mr. Scouten, however, to perform any tricks.

"You wretch!" exclaimed his master vehemently, at this evidence of insubordination. "Why, Scouten, I spent a whole week teaching him to do that, and now he won't do it. It's enough to drive one crazy."

"Bow, wow," said Poofru, looking at Mr. Scouten as much as to say: "Who are you and why should I go through my motions for you?"

Mr. Scouten patted Poofru on the head and said: "You ought to be a good doggie and perform for your distinguished master."

"Distinguished master," thought Mr. Fairfield. "That has the right sound."

Distinguished master thereupon addressed Mr. Scouten as follows: "Well, I suppose you've come to talk about something else than dogs?"

"Yes, Mr. Fairfield, I have," Mr. Scouten replied. "Your representative informed me you want to go to the Legislature. That is true, I suppose?"

"Yes, Mr. Scouten," interposed Mrs. Fairfield. "Mr. Fairfield is a very active man and like all active men with active brains he needs something to keep him employed. He thinks going to the Legislature would help to occupy his mind."

"You're what they call the Boss or Leader, aren't you?" Mr. Fairfield inquired lazily.

"I'm one of the servants of the Public, Mr. Fairfield. You know we're all trying to serve the Public."

"What do you think of that, Poofru! Speak to the gentleman."

But Poofru remained silent.

"Speak to the gentleman, I tell you, Poofru. This dog will drive me crazy. He's what the French call a little devil. Speak, Poofru, or I shall whip you."

Thus bidden, Poofru gave vent to a savage little "Bow."

"If you do want to go to the Legislature, Mr. Fairfield," said Mr. Scouten, "you can go."

"Poofru, do you hear what the gentleman says? He says we can go to the Legislature."

"Bow," said Poofru.

"But isn't it dreadful," remarked Mrs. Fairfield, "the way men who run for office are talked about in the newspapers? The things the papers say about them are awful. Don't you think so, Mr. Scouten?"

"It's a regular occurrence, madam," replied Mr. Scouten. "The newspapers do it with everybody. No matter how good a reputation a man has before he runs for office, he's no sooner nominated than the papers of the opposite Party begin to berate him."

"Yes," exclaimed Mr. Fairfield, shaking his

fists vigorously; "and they'll berate a man whether he goes into Politics or not. Didn't a little wretch of a reporter call here one day to see me and ask for an interview and then go away and publish an article saying I was a typical rich man's son, good for nothing but racing horses and hunting? What would Sir Harry have said to fellows like him, Poofru? He would have said just what I say: Go to the devil!"

Having consigned the newspaper men to his Satanic Majesty, Mr. Fairfield patted Poofru on the head and announced that he was the greatest poodle in the United States or England.

Mrs. Fairfield said she had heard there was another candidate for the office to which Mr. Fairfield aspired.

"Yes, Scouten," said Mr. Fairfield; "what's his name, Back-whittle or Whittle-back? We've heard nothing but this man for a long time. Who is he, anyway?"

"A good sort of a man, Mr. Fairfield. If you are ready to talk business, I shall have to

ask that we talk without the presence of a third party."

Being anxious to get back to Sir Harry and the hounds as soon as possible, Mr. Fairfield, much against his will, asked Mrs. Fairfield to retire. Then he rang for a servant and ordered cigarettes and champagne and invited Mr. Scouten to join him in attacking them.

"As I was saying about Mr. Whittleback," said Mr. Scouten, after each had drunk a glass of champagne and Mr. Fairfield had lighted a cigarette; "he's a good sort of man, but he's getting a lot of impractical notions in his head about corporations existing to serve the people and men being in Politics to serve the Public. A man like that isn't useful to us. We give the people what we want them to have. We turn down those we want to turn down and we put up those we want to put up."

"What do you think of that, Poofru!"

"There is one observation I would like to make before we proceed further," Mr. Scouten continued: "Business is business."

"Ha!" said Mr. Fairfield. "So I have heard."

"You want to go to the Legislature?"

"That is what I have said, and if I haven't said it I will say it now. Poofru, we want to go to the Legislature, don't we?"

Poofru answered "Yes" with a single bark.

"There is but one more question for me to ask and for you to answer: "Are you willing to pay the price?"

"Are we willing to pay the price, Poofru? Ha, ha! Are we willing to pay the price. What is the price?"

"Five thousand dollars."

"The devil it is. Five thousand dollars!"

Mr. Scouten, no longer the pretended servant of the Public, but the political boss, selling his power for gold and driving the best bargain he could, sat looking intently into the face of the young aristocrat, taking an inventory of his attainments, thinking what a figurehead he would be in the Legislature, and smiled cynically as he listened to his nervous exclamation:

"And why should you be paid five thousand dollars? Who are you that I should be paying you five thousand dollars! If I want to go to the Legislature I won't ask you if I can go. To the devil with you and your nomination!"

"Fairfield!" ejaculated Mr. Scouten, hastily rising and bringing his clenched fist down upon the table. "If you want the office of Assemblyman from this District you can get it in but one way under the sun. The people have nothing to say about the nomination. You've nothing to say about it. I'm the one and the only one who has the say in this matter. Who am I? I'm the leader of the Republican Organization in Poquogg County, and neither you nor any other man can go to the Legislature from this county without coming to me!"

Poofru, having more spirit than his distinguished master, still kept up the demonstration he had begun as soon as Mr. Scouten rose to his feet, whereupon distinguished master patted him on the head and said: "He needn't be so mad about it, need he, Poofru, because we

don't want to pay him so much money to go to the Legislature?"

But the payment was agreed upon. Mr. Fairfield was to hand Mr. Scouten two thousand, five hundred dollars in cash within a week, and the remaining two thousand, five hundred dollars was to be paid in cash after the convention had nominated Mr. Fairfield for the Assembly.

"About the only real advantage I can see in going to the Legislature," remarked Mr. Fairfield, after these details had been arranged, "is that a man gets the title of 'Honorable.' Such a nice thing to have, Scouten, a title: 'The Hon. Dudley Fairfield'; they go well together, Scouten, very well indeed."

"A very worthy distinction."

"That's one thing I don't like about this country, the fact that you have no titles here as they have in England. By the way, what do I get for this money?"

"You get elected to the Assembly from Poquogg County."

"Do you hear that, Poofru? He says we

get elected to the Assembly. Ha, ha! Another glass of champagne, sir. Drink to the Hon. Dudley Fairfield."

" You will have to announce yourself as a candidate," observed Mr. Scouten.

" Yes, but, Scouten, remember I don't go around talking and shaking hands with these poor devils of the voters. Do we, Poofru?"

" Mr. Fairfield, I fear you have forgotten my observation that business is business."

" He seems very fond of that observation, doesn't he, Poofru?"

" It means this: If you want a thing and a man who knows all about it tells you what you must do to get it, you've got to do as he says. You can't be elected to office unless you get down to the people and make them think you are one of them."

" What do I care for the people? But if he says we've got to do it, Poofru, I suppose we have."

" Exactly," replied Mr. Scouten. " You're the kind of man The Organization wants."

" And now I would like to make an observa-

tion," Mr. Fairfield remarked: "With all your talk of equality in this country" (it was one of Mr. Fairfield's peculiarities that he always talked as if he were an alien), "it doesn't seem to me there is much chance for a poor man in Politics."

"No," agreed Mr. Scouten, "nor in anything else. Money's what we're running on now-a-days and what we're running for. I wouldn't say this to every one, but you know it's the truth."

"Ha, ha, Scouten, you bet we know it's the truth. Have another glass."

And then the buyer and the seller of the Public's birthright drank their champagne in silence.

CHAPTER XXVII

WE have come to a chapter of our history that will be read with deep concern by all those who love justice and the honor of our country. As we begin to write it, would that we could call to our aid some of the Muses to guide our pen. But as a contemporary critic has forever banished them from this part of the world, we must content ourselves with the plain English of our fathers. Pausing here a moment — for our task is nearly finished — we would shed a tear over the sudden ending of the public career of the distinguished man whose history we have been narrating, and commend him to the everlasting admiration of his fellow Americans. If fair damsels and stately matrons weep over the plight of some misguided lover before he is set down happy and at peace upon the last page of the book, should not we weep over the fall of this great man, whose fortunes we have followed from

humble beginnings until they have become intimately related to the welfare of our great country? With what patience did he bear the criticisms and abuse of an ignorant Public during the early days of his public activity! With what modesty did he receive those honors a grateful and awakened people were at last proud to shower upon him in the shape of their praise and approval! Did ever knight of the olden time show greater courage than he when he demanded of the legislators at the Capital the passage of the "Bill to Restore Representative Government" to the people? Did ever the Public have a more loyal and incorruptible champion than he who spurned the Hon. Stephen Goodfellow's offer of gold for a betrayal of its interests to the interests of the corporations? Ah, Mr. Whittleback, the people with whom you lived appreciated you, but for a brief season only, and you have gone the way of nearly all the truly great, enjoying for a short time the rewards of virtue in the smiles of the Public's favor, and then, through no fault of yours, you were humiliated, de-

feated, and forgotten! The next generation, learning of your life and work through this poor record, may perhaps do you tardy justice and seek to right its predecessor's wrong by putting you in the Hall of Fame. Inspired by this hope, we write the concluding chapters of your history and leave your fate as a Reformer — and ours as a Historian — to the mercy of the reader.

Another month had passed. The primaries had been held. Certain free and independent American citizens — who were not averse to obeying the orders of the Poquogg County Republican Organization — had been elected delegates to hold a convention at the County Seat and nominate a candidate for Member of Assembly. So to Gilead they came, together with a number of other free and independent citizens who attended as spectators. There they were at the old familiar hotel with its old familiar bar and the old bartender, who knew just how to make one patriotic and enthusiastic in the cause of the Republican Party. There were the Re-

publicans from the northern end of the county, who talked through their noses and among whom the old time practice of fist fighting was still preserved in all its original purity. There were the wood choppers, who chopped wood in the winter and fished and talked Politics in the summer, and who were in their element wherever Politics was to be discussed or whiskey drunk. There were the farmers with their long chin whiskers and long noses, famous for their skill at horse trading. There were the denizens of the town of Mutton Hollow, who claimed to be the only pure and undefiled Republicans in the country. There were those who had come to make speeches and those who had come to applaud the speakers; there were those who were going to tell stories and those who had come to laugh at the stories and declare the stories were the best they had ever heard, although they had heard them scores of times before. There were Mr. Scouten's lieutenants, with their pockets full of The Organization's money and with orders to spend it for whiskey and cigars. There was the Hon. John L. Whodd, as red-

faced, as happy-go-lucky and as jolly as ever, and he was never so much at home in his life. How did the Hon. Mr. Whodd find himself? asked the good Republicans who shook hands with him. Never better, answered the Hon. Mr. Whodd. And how were things at the Capital? Things at the Capital were O. K., Mr. Whodd took good care of that. Then they all went into the bar room and had a drink at the Hon. Mr. Whodd's expense, for in the excitement of convention and election time Mr. Whodd's last total abstinence resolution had gone the way of all the others. Then they all came out again and met more good Republicans and told more stories and laughed at more jokes and smoked more cigars. Then Mr. Whodd met the Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback, who was continually beset by the people who wanted favors; and Mr. Whodd gave Mr. Whittleback a hearty handshake and invited everybody to come in the bar room again and have another drink.

It soon began to be rumored that there was a rival candidate in the field and that The Or-

ganization was favoring him. Then leaders of election districts began to ask Mr. Whittleback if he was sure of his delegates, and how many had been instructed for him, which information Mr. Whittleback had to confess his inability to give; and was there any truth in the rumor that there was a rival candidate? Scores of obtrusive men who were not delegates, but only spectators, promised to stand by him to the very last ditch, and would he come into the bar room and have a drink with them, for which, as the candidate, he was always left to pay. A man who said he was experienced in arranging political demonstrations offered for a certain sum to get up a Whittleback demonstration in the convention, which should last any number of minutes Mr. Whittleback fixed, the longer the time the more he must pay. Another had supreme faith in the efficacy of dollar bills, and if Mr. Whittleback would put a hundred dollars into his hands and let him distribute them, it would undoubtedly turn the tide in his favor, if there was such a thing that it was turning against him.

Mr. Whittleback did not know where Mr. Scouten was. While he was wondering what had become of that gentleman, a lieutenant tapped him on the shoulder and announced that The Organization wanted to see him.

"Well, Mr. Whittleback," said Mr. Scouten, when the lieutenant ushered Mr. Whittleback into The Organization's room on the second floor of the hotel, "we didn't know what had become of you."

Mr. Harker, Mr. Windy and the other members of The Organization, who were seated around a large table, expressed their pleasure at seeing him. Mr. Whittleback noticed that the table was set for dinner, but that the indispensable decanter was at one end of it.

"We are going to have dinner soon and we want you to have dinner with us," Mr. Scouten continued. "We have been completing the final arrangements for the Convention."

"There's a rival candidate in the field, Mr. Whittleback," remarked Mr. Harker; "a Dudley Fairfield from your end of the county.

You haven't made any deal with this Fairfield, have you?"

"Deal! I'll be blessed if I know what you mean by deal," replied Mr. Whittleback.

Some of the members of The Organization laughed in spite of themselves, but Mr. Harker preserved a very solemn air and continued: "Well, we didn't know, Mr. Whittleback, but that you might have made a deal with him, sold out to him, in fact, for he seems to be gaining ground."

"But you being an Organization man, Whittleback," said Mr. Windy, paying a visit to the decanter, "haven't got very much to fear."

Mr. Whittleback said he thought not.

"We're here to abide by the wishes of the delegates," remarked Mr. Scouten ominously, "like honest American citizens."

"Yes," said Mr. Harker, while the members gravely nodded their heads, "like honest American citizens."

On his return from visiting the decanter Mr. Windy went to the window that overlooked the street in front of the hotel and looked down

upon the throng of citizens below. Turning around to The Organization he exclaimed: "Whodd's down below there and he's been drinking with about everybody and he's going it yet."

"Sandbag," said Mr. Scouten, addressing the lieutenant, "go down and tell Whodd to come up here at once.—He'll be drunk before it's time to open the Convention."

The lieutenant, thus bidden, went off in quest of the Hon. Mr. Whodd, and in a few minutes ushered that distinguished legislator into the presence of The Organization.

"Whodd," said Mr. Scouten, "dinner will soon be ready and we want you to take dinner with us. How are things down below?"

"All right," replied the Hon. Mr. Whodd, whose spirits were the very highest; "all right, Scouten. Come on down all of you and have a drink on me."

"Whodd," said Mr. Scouten, without acknowledging the invitation, "we've decided to have Harker call the Convention to order and name you as Chairman."

"Yes," replied Mr. Whodd. "Ha, ha!" he exclaimed, catching sight of the decanter, "you don't need to go down to get a drink, you have it right by you."

Mr. Windy seemed to take delight in making a journey from his seat to the window and looking down upon the citizens outside and incidentally stopping at the decanter on the way, for he now made the journey again.

"Why don't you go down there and talk to those people?" inquired the Hon. Mr. Whodd as Mr. Windy returned to his seat.

"What do we care about those people down there?" replied Mr. Windy, with great contempt. "All they're good for is to do as they're told."

All this time an engine had been snorting and puffing along the single track railroad that connects Gilead with the Metropolis. Attached to it was a private car, and in the private car was the Hon. Wallace Brandywine, who had spent the summer in Europe and had returned home in time to attend the fall conventions of

the Republican Party throughout the State and to look after the interests of his corporation. In due time the aforesaid engine brought the private car into the Gilead station, when it gave a long sharp whistle as much as to say: "Take notice, you Republican politicians and free electors who are holding this Convention, that I have brought the Hon. Wallace Brandywine all the way to Poquogg County, and have brought him safely and quickly too!"

The free electors did take notice, and as soon as Mr. Brandywine's carriage came in sight they shouted and cheered for him, and Mr. Scouten rushed out to welcome him and conducted him to The Organization's room.

"Ha, ha," said Mr. Brandywine, shaking hands all around, "you're going to have dinner up here by yourselves while our friends the voters eat down below. Well, Mr. Whittleback," he continued, after the dinner had commenced, "how is the Reform Movement getting on?"

Mr. Whittleback replied it was getting on very well.

"Glad to hear it," said Mr. Brandywine; "reform is something that is always needed."

"Mr. Whittleback has a rival candidate for Member of Assembly," remarked Mr. Scouten. "A young fellow by the name of Fairfield, Dudley Fairfield. Ever hear of him, Mr. Brandywine?"

"Fairfield. Son of the late Richard Fairfield?"

"Yes."

"Why, Scouten, I knew Richard Fairfield. He's the man who made a fortune one winter by cornering all the flour. A mighty clever stroke. Young Fairfield ought to be proud of such a father."

"How long ago was that?" Mr. Windy ventured to inquire.

"That I don't just know," replied Mr. Brandywine. "Anyway, it was some years before I graduated from Harvard."

His graduation from Harvard being a great event in Mr. Brandywine's life, it was his invariable custom to fix every date with reference to it.

"And Whodd, how are you?" he inquired, turning to that legislator, who was vigorously engaged with the soup. "They tell me you're going to the Senate."

Mr. Whodd, who looked in excellent condition for going to bed, replied yes, he was, with as much positiveness as though he had already been elected.

"Well, I'm glad you are, Whodd," Mr. Brandywine continued. "You're the right man in the right place. I hope you'll make as good a Senator as you have an Assemblyman."

Mr. Whodd said he hoped he would and ventured to remark that the soup was very good.

"Yes, indeed," Mr. Brandywine agreed. "It's excellent. I must tell the boys at the Convention what good soup I had. Where do you hold the Convention, Scouten?"

"In the Court House."

"In my old county," Mr. Brandywine continued in a reminiscent vein, "they hold their conventions under the trees at the same place where I was nominated for the Assembly. I

went to the Assembly, you know, the year I graduated from Harvard."

"And you made some great speeches that first year, Mr. Brandywine," the Hon. Mr. Whodd interposed. "They say at the Capital that in those speeches that year you hit the railroads the hardest they've ever been hit."

"Ha, ha! Do they say that, Whodd? Well, I guess they're not far out of the way. But you know if I hadn't hit 'em hard, Whodd, I wouldn't be riding around in private cars to-day. Ha, ha!"

While their leaders were thus regaling themselves upstairs, the delegates and spectators were engaged in a fierce struggle down below to decide which should first enter the dining room. The dining room was too small to admit the entire number at once and the delegates claimed the right to eat at the first tables. This claim the spectators disputed. The door leading to the dining room became the center of a conflict almost as fierce as that waged

about the Standard by soldiers in ancient times. The proprietor of the hotel, fearing that serious damage would be done to his property, finally proposed a compromise that would allow an equal number of delegates and spectators to eat at the same time. This was agreed to and the dinner was eaten without further trouble. The roast turkey and the pumpkin pie — which The Organization had generously provided — were very powerful agents in arousing enthusiasm for the Republican Party, and after dinner all formed in line and marched to the Court House, feeling that the election was as good as carried and that the Democrats had again suffered ignominious defeat.

“Will the Convention come to order!” shouted Mr. Harker from the platform.

“Gentlemen,” he continued, “the County Committee has instructed me to present the name of the Hon. John L. Whodd for Chairman of the Convention.”

“Hip, hip, hurrah for Whodd!” shouted the delegates. The Hon. Mr. Whodd was

elected Chairman by acclamation and duly escorted to the platform.

"Gentlemen," he said, when the applause had subsided, "it's the custom for the Chairman to make a speech on assuming the chair; but I'm not going to make a speech, because we have with us to-day that world-famous Republican who has forgotten more about speaking than I ever knew — the Hon. Wallace Brandywine." Applause. "But we're all Republicans." Cries of, "You bet we are." "I'm proud, gentlemen, to belong to the Republican Party. It's the Party that's got all the money and all the brains." Laughter and applause. "It's the Party that gets there on election day." More applause. "We're going to have another election this fall, gentlemen, and we've come here to-day to nominate a man for Member of Assembly from this District. We're not only going to nominate him, but we're going to elect him!" Applause and cries of, "You bet we are." "Gentlemen," the Hon. Mr. Whodd continued, laughing, "I'm going to stop right now or I'll make a speech after

all." Cries of, "Go on," "You're all right, Whodd." "Thank you, gentlemen. I thank you, too, for electing me your Chairman, and now what is your further pleasure?"

"Mis-ter Chair-man!" shouted a little man in the rear of the room, jumping to his feet and swinging his arms, "Mis-ter Chair-man."

Laughter and cries of, "The Senator," "The Senator," "Hear the Senator."

The little man who was nicknamed "The Senator" had a little peaked head, blinking eyes and a big wart on one side of his jaw. In addition to his whimsical appearance he had a piping voice which gave forth only very short sentences at a time.

"I'm a cit-i-zen — Mis-ter Chair-man!"

"Of course you are," laughingly rejoined Mr. Whodd.

"And you — can't dis-pute it," continued "The Senator" shaking his fist.

Laughter and cries of, "Sit down."

"I won't — sit down. I'm a cit-i-zen — Mis-ter Chair-man — and a delly-gate — and I'd — like to ask — Mis-ter Chair-man —

a ques-tion — why was every-body else — give — five see-gars and I — was only give — one? ”

“ You’re out of order, Senator! ” replied the Hon. Mr. Whodd. “ Sit down.” And there-upon “ The Senator ” was unceremoniously pulled down and soon left the room in charge of a lieutenant who pretended he was going to get “ The Senator ” his other four cigars, while “ The Senator’s ” place was filled by an alter-nate who promised to keep quiet.

The secretaries having been chosen, and the chairman and secretaries sworn to obey the laws and uphold the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State, and incidentally to perform faithfully their duties as officers of the Convention, the Hon. Mr. Whodd stated that nominations for Member of Assembly were in order.

By this time everybody knew there were to be two candidates presented to the Convention, but nobody knew which candidate The Organi-zation favored, everybody taking it for granted, however, that that honorable body

favored Mr. Whittleback. No one was surprised, therefore, when Mr. Harker came forward and began to address the Convention. He was a Republican, he declared, and had always been a Republican. Applause. He had no use for Democrats or the Democratic Party. More applause. He had no use for anything that was no good and the Democratic Party was no good. Cries of, "That's right." Any man who wanted to work could get work and good pay. No starvation wages such as they got in Europe! But when the Democrats were in power you couldn't get work at even starvation wages! Laughter and applause. Therefore, it was necessary to make a vigorous campaign to keep the Democratic Party out of power and to keep the Republican Party in power. He nominated as candidate for Member of Assembly a man they all knew, for he had lately made himself known to every one, not only in Poquogg County, but throughout the State. He placed in nomination the Hon. Nathaniel Whittleback of Sky View.

A great demonstration of shouting and cheering followed Mr. Harker's speech, in the midst of which demonstration the giant form of the Supervisor of the Town of Mutton Hollow was seen making its way to the platform. Everybody knew the Supervisor. His nose was so large, and his mouth, chin and forehead were sunk in so far that he looked as if the nose had given them all a great fright and they were trying to get away from it. The fact that his tongue had very ready powers of speech, together with the tendency of that organ to throw its discourses into poetry, caused the Supervisor to be much sought after at Sunday School picnics and political conventions, for, being a man who would always do as he was told, he could always be trusted to speak.

"Free and independent fellow citizens," he began, "I come from the town of Mutton Hollow, the town of the finest hoop poles in the country, and of the great mountains o'er whose peaks each day the morn doth stalk in russet mantle clad." Laughter and applause. "Yes, my friends," he continued, laughing heartily

himself, "I'm from the Way-back-overs, the men who are as free as the wind and the clouds and as solid as mountains for the Republican Party." Applause. "Why am I a Republican, gentlemen? Because it was the Republican Party that placed the star of hope above the cradle of the poor man's babe." Tremendous applause, and the delegates from the town of Mutton Hollow remarked that the Supervisor was at his best. "These men of the mountains, gentlemen, have heard of the man who has been placed in nomination. Every wind that rustles over the hillsides brings the story of his triumphs." Laughter, in which the Supervisor joined. "Every brook that babbles down the mountains says amen to his principles." Laughter and applause. "He is the incarnation of Republican principles, gentlemen, and a Republican every inch of him." More applause. "Gentlemen, the Way-back-overs from the town of Mutton Hollow told me to come here to-day and say a word for Nat Whittleback. Everything that's good comes from the Republican Party, but he's the

best yet." Tremendous applause. "On behalf of the Republicans from the town of Mutton Hollow I second his nomination."

This being a favorable opportunity for the display of oratorical ability, several other local orators seconded Mr. Whittleback's nomination and praised him for the various political virtues he was supposed to possess. Mr. Scouten was unusually generous in the number of seconding speeches he allowed made on this occasion, but at last he gave the word and the Hon. Mr. Whodd declared that Mr. Whittleback had been duly nominated and asked if there was another nomination.

"Yes, Mr. Chairman, there is another nomination," shouted the Hon. Sam. Puckey.

"Come up on the platform, Puckey," suggested Mr. Whodd.

The Hon. Mr. Puckey, in return for his loyalty to The Organization, had been supported at public expense all his life. He then held the office of Inspector of the County Jail, an office that imposed upon him no work except to draw his salary. He was an Organi-

zation man, he declared, as he faced the Convention from the platform. He had stood by the Republican Party through thick and thin. His father was a Republican before him. He did not want to see the Republican Party lose a single Republican member in the Assembly. He came in the interests of the laboring man. The labor vote was not to be slighted. It might not be known to all the delegates that there was in Poquogg County an Association of Working Men, a branch of the State Working Men's Association. It might not be known, also, that the man who had been nominated had given mortal offense to that Association. How? He held in his hand an affidavit of a reputable Republican, a worker in the ranks. That affidavit was evidence that this man Whittleback said publicly on one occasion that a man had a right to work if he wanted to. His election was therefore impossible. By that statement he had shown himself opposed to the fundamental principle of that Association. For no man had a right to work except upon such terms as the Associa-

tion said. In addition to that the said Whittleback had persistently refused to grant the petition of the working men of his town for a higher rate of wages. Working men would not support the candidacy of such a man. He would nominate a man who had given offense to no one. A man who would move in the halls of the Legislature with the grace of superior birth and higher education. He nominated for Member of Assembly from Poquogg County Dudley Fairfield, Esq.

There was an ominous silence when the Hon. Mr. Puckey had finished. A lieutenant seconded Mr. Fairfield's nomination and Mr. Whodd declared the nominations closed and ordered the voting to begin.

"Hurrah for Whittleback!" shouted the delegates, the majority of whom had never heard of Mr. Fairfield. "Three cheers for Nat Whittleback." There were cries of: "What's the matter with Whittleback?" and answers of: "He's all right," until it seemed the delegates would go wild with applauding. Once or twice the lieutenants endeavored to

arouse some enthusiasm for Mr. Fairfield, but their cheers were unheard in the din of applause which sounded for his popular rival.

In a private room the Hon. Henrick Scouten and the Hon. Wallace Brandywine calmly smoked their cigars and through a small window looked out upon the Convention while this demonstration was in progress. At length Mr. Brandywine turned to Mr. Scouten and observed with a smile: "They make a great deal of noise for people who haven't anything to say about it, don't they, Scouten?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Scouten. "Do you want me to show you what obedient delegates they are, how good they are to do as they're told? — Sandbag," he continued, calling a lieutenant, "pass the word along to the chairmen of the delegations that they're to vote enough of their delegates for Fairfield to nominate him."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Brandywine. "That's the way you do it here?"

"Yes, and it isn't only here, but it's the same all over the country."

Lieutenant Sandbag delivered the orders of his chief. The receipt of the orders had a most depressing effect upon the delegates. Then Mr. Whittleback was not The Organization's candidate after all. What a pity. He had probably offended The Organization. Then why had The Organization permitted his name to be presented to the Convention? To throw upon the delegates the responsibility of defeating him. The excuse to the people would be the trumped-up story of his antagonizing the working men. Who was Fairfield? One of the aristocrats of Sky View. But The Organization wanted him. There was nothing to do, therefore, but to vote for him, for to be disloyal to The Organization was to be disloyal to the Party and to be discredited and disgraced. The man who went contrary to The Organization's orders could never get an office, an appointment, a pass on the railroad, or a seat on a delegation for the rest of his life. The Organization had to be obeyed at all costs, and most of the delegates did obey. A few, with rare heroism, refused to vote at all and

were marked men forever after, but their number was not sufficiently large to change the result. There was no more enthusiasm. As loyal Republicans they voted for Mr. Fairfield, but they would not cheer for him, and it was to a silent Convention that Mr. Whodd announced that Dudley Fairfield had received the nomination for Member of Assembly.

"Wonderful!" exclaimed the Hon. Mr. Brandywine, laughing and shaking Mr. Scouten by the hand. "Scouten, let me congratulate you on the way you have your people under control. It must mean something to you?"

"It means five thousand dollars in this case," thought Mr. Scouten.

"Gentlemen of the Convention," said the Hon. John L. Whodd, "we have with us today the greatest orator in the Republican Party. When he was a Member of the Assembly he was the greatest talker in the Lower House. When he is at a dinner he makes the best speech that is made. And when he is in Europe none of those fellows over there can

touch a feather to him." Laughter. " Gentlemen, you all know him. He has come a long way to speak to us, and I now take pleasure in introducing to you our distinguished fellow Republican, the Hon. Wallace Brandywine."

" Gentlemen of the Convention and fellow Republicans of Poquogg County," began the Hon. Mr. Brandywine, when the applause had subsided. " I am delighted to be here with you to-day. In my boyhood I became acquainted with some of your noble old patriots, many of whom went to the war to fight and die for their country. The bones of many of them lie on Southern battlefields. Some of them lie up in your little cemetery yonder. Gentlemen, I want to tell you I am proud of Poquogg County and of her sons and daughters." Great applause. " My friends," Mr. Brandywine continued, " I never had such a good time in my life as I have had to-day. I have eaten at the best hotels in our country, I have dined at every restaurant from Paris to the Danube, but for good, wholesome, healthy,

appetizing food, without any indigestion afterward, I never have eaten anything to compare with the roast turkey and the pumpkin pie they gave me over here at your hotel to-day."

Laughter and applause.

"I am proud to be a Republican," Mr. Brandywine continued.

"I cast my first Republican vote the year I graduated from Harvard and I've voted the Republican ticket ever since."

Great applause.

"Ever since the Republican Party was organized it has been developing our country, making it greater and more powerful, and the only time the course of progress has ever been interrupted has been when our friends the Democrats have got in and run the country in the ground."

More laughter.

"And this fall we come before the people of this State and we say: Look at our past record, see what we have done; here is what we will do if you will give us the chance for another two years. And, gentlemen, I know the people of this State will bury our friends the Democrats under such an avalanche of votes on election day that it will take them all the rest of the year to

find their way out." Tremendous applause. The delegates jumped to their feet, waved their hands, and shouted until they were hoarse.

Having now warmed up his audience, Mr. Brandywine proceeded to discuss the issues of the campaign upon which they were entering, from which discussion he came to the conclusion that the position the Democratic Party took upon the issues was invariably wrong and the position the Republican Party took was invariably right.

"Gentlemen," he continued, after disposing of the issues, "we are going to nominate and elect as Governor a man who has been a Republican from his youth, whose loyalty to the Party has never been questioned, whose services to the Party have been many and valuable, and who has the distinction of having shaken hands with more people than any other man in the State. I refer to the Hon. Bartholomew K. Squabb." Great applause. "And gentlemen, you have kept up the standard of the Party in this Convention by nominating the son of my old personal friend. His father,

gentlemen, was one of the brightest business men in this country, and his son Dudley Fairfield, gentlemen, the man whom you have nominated to-day, is a chip off the old block.” Applause by the lieutenants. “And gentlemen, I want to tell you something about my friend Whodd here: Ever since he has been in the Assembly I have had a chance to come in contact with him and to watch his development as a legislator. He is one of the best liked men we have in the Legislature. When the Speaker of the Assembly was looking for a man to be Chairman of the very important Committee on Laws and Public Morals, he appointed the Hon. John L. Whodd, your representative, as Chairman of that Committee. Send him to the Senate. He is one of the rising men in Politics in this State.” Great applause. “There is another thing about the Republican Party in Poquogg County that I like,” the Hon. Mr. Brandywine continued: “You can always be relied upon. When the State Committee looks over the field before election to see where the doubtful districts are,

Poquogg County is always put down in the SURE column!" Applause. "I attribute that, first, to your own patriotism and good sense, and second, to the faithfulness, courage and organizing ability of your distinguished leader, the Hon. Henrick Scouten. He has put Poquogg County in the Republican column and put it there to stay. And when election night comes next November and the votes are counted, when we hear of the big majorities that other rural counties have rolled up for the Republican Party, we will hear, then, gentlemen, that your good old county of Poquogg has led the way with double her usual majority and that you are still the banner Republican county of all the rural counties of the State."

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE campaign was on in the State and in the Nation.

The Republicans were the hope of the people: The Democrats were the hope of the people. Everything would be all right if the Republicans were elected: Everything would be all wrong if the Republicans were elected. The people knew too much about the Democrats to put them in power: The people knew too much about the Republicans to put them in power. The Republicans were the friends of the working men, and had always been and would always be the friends of the working men: The sole purpose of the Democrats was to uplift the working man, and this would always be their purpose. The country would be safe in the hands of the Republicans: The country would be safe in the hands of the Democrats. Did the people want to have the country go to the dogs? Then let them vote

for the Democrats. Did the people want to have prosperity continue? Then let them vote for the Republicans. Who brought good crops and high prices? The Republicans. Who brought poor crops and starvation wages? The Democrats.

The Republican National Committee sent out a veritable army of orators and spellbinders and Congressmen and Senators to tell the people what a great Party the Republican Party was, and what it had done, and what it would do, and what a poor Party the Democratic Party was, and how it would run the country into the ground. The Democratic National Committee sent out a veritable army of orators and spellbinders and Congressmen and Senators to tell the people what a great Party the Democratic Party was, and what it would do, and what a poor Party the Republican Party was, and that it had never done anything for the Public, but had taxed the Public and robbed the Public.

The Republican newspapers published whole pages about the Democrats and their extra-

gance when they held office. The Democratic newspapers published an equal number of pages about the Republicans and their extravagance when they held office.

There were parades and torch light processions, and bands, and fireworks, and meetings in-doors and out-doors. The people listened to the Republican orators and laughed at their jokes and applauded their gibes at the Democrats. The people listened with equal eagerness to the Democratic orators and applauded when they made fun of the Republicans. The Republicans called the Democrats rascals and the Democrats called the Republicans rascals. The Republicans promised everything: The Democrats promised everything. The Republicans went to the records to prove their case against the Democrats and the Democrats went to the records to prove their case against the Republicans. The Democrats predicted success: The Republicans predicted success.

The rival candidates journeyed about the country and made speeches at all times of the day and night. They patted children on the

head and fondled babies and praised honest working men and shook hands with them and said it gave them great pleasure to meet so many honest people, and if the honest working men and all good citizens would kindly remember them on election day it would result in untold benefit to the Republic.

In Poquogg County the would-be Hon. Dudley Fairfield left off hunting and riding and spent whole days at a time, much against his will, shaking hands with the rabble, and telling the rabble he was delighted to see them. Mr. Scouten praised him and told the Public what a fine young man he was and the Democrats laughed at him and told the Public he was an aristocrat. They made fun of his horses and his dogs and ridiculed his English tastes and his bungling speeches. The rabble solicited loans from him and told him to refuse if he dared. Everybody seemed to have the idea that the grounds about Fairfield Mansion House were public property because their owner was running for office. In short, Mr. Fairfield was petitioned and interviewed and laughed at

and criticised so much that long before the campaign closed he was more disgusted with the Public than ever and was heartily sorry he had ever had anything to do with Politics or political honors.

At last when the tumult ceased and the votes were counted it was found that the Republicans had been victorious in the Nation, that the Hon. Bartholomew K. Squabb had been elected Governor of the State, and that the Hon. John L. Whodd had been elected Senator, but that the would-be Hon. Dudley Fairfield had been ignominiously defeated for the Assembly.

So closed that particular chapter of The American Comedy.

CHAPTER XXIX

THIS book contains the story of a man who was introduced to the political world as a Reformer. Now when he has been defeated and is disheartened, we turn, as he turned, to the only person in Sky View who had expressed real sympathy for him in his career and who seemed to understand. Since his first meeting with the school principal Mr. Whittleback had sought opportunities of meeting her and of knowing her better. He had never failed to find these meetings keenly interesting and was always sorry when they were over. Her ready sympathy, her wide knowledge and broad interests, had strongly appealed to him. She had warned him, he remembered, against Mr. Scouten. He had laughed at the time; now he regarded her warning as almost a prophecy. It is not for us to trace the progress of Mr. Whittleback's feelings for this young woman who had come so suddenly into his life.

His interest became respect, then came admiration, and his respect and admiration ripened at last into that more serious feeling which in any well regulated chronicle can have but one ending. Such happenings are foreign to our theme. Miss Alnor herself had found it convenient to remain in Sky View during the summer vacation and Mr. Whittleback's opportunities of meeting her had not become less frequent during the summer months. She had been more amused than interested in the beginning of his political career and had regarded it as one of those community contests that are of no importance. But after knowing him better she had been impressed by his sincerity and honesty and thenceforth was one of his ardent admirers. She early saw through the sham of Mr. Scouten's pretended friendship and suspected where the whole thing would end, but she had no idea that before the end came Mr. Whittleback would become a national figure and would impress his ideals upon the whole nation. Meanwhile, she thought there was no harm in encouraging by her sympathy and ad-

vice a man who was engaged in so noble a cause. Now he had been defeated and humiliated and needed encouragement more than ever.

The monthly pay checks for the last month's salaries were overdue and Mr. Whittleback had not been heard from. It was with no small degree of satisfaction, therefore, that Miss Alnor, coming from the Post Office one afternoon a few days after election, met Mr. Whittleback at almost the identical spot she had first met him many months before. Then he was at the beginning of his career; now he was apparently at the end.

"Come into the office," said Mr. Whittleback, "I'm behind with the checks."

"We thought you had forgotten us."

"I'll be blessed if I hadn't, to tell you the truth," Mr. Whittleback confessed. "I just finished signing them this morning," and he handed her the checks of her assistant teachers, as well as her own. "You heard about the Convention?"

"Yes," said Miss Alnor, "I was not surprised."

"Not surprised!" exclaimed Mr. Whittleback. "Why weren't you surprised? Everybody else was."

"Because I knew Scouten would sell you out or would sell any one else out if he could do so to advantage."

"You're right; you're right, Miss Alnor, although I'd have staked my life on him. He's the slickest talker you ever heard, but he's a damned scoundrel.—Excuse me, I'm accustomed to talk to men."

"It's all right, Mr. Whittleback, I understand."

"You seem always to understand," said Mr. Whittleback. "Is it because you're a school teacher?"

"It's because I'm a woman."

"They're not all like you. They don't all understand. But I'm disgusted with the whole crowd of these politicians and I'm disgusted with myself more than with any of them. I'm a failure and a fool."

"You are neither, Mr. Whittleback. No man ever fails who does his best. In this matter you have interested me more than I can tell you because to my mind you have represented and typified the people. You knew little of political conditions when you began; you have learned little by little as you went along and the more you learned and the worse you found things to be the less able you felt to cope with them. So you become discouraged and call yourself a failure. Isn't it something to have awakened the people to the condition of things? The people will get their government back, Mr. Whittleback."

"Then they've got to deport such fellows as Scouten!"

"That's funny, Mr. Whittleback; you're humorous."

"I'll be blessed if I see anything funny about it. There I'd spent money and time and everybody supposed I was to be nominated for the Assembly and then at the last minute I was turned down. It's queer I should be telling

you about it, though, but you seem to understand."

"I do understand, Mr. Whittleback. It's a woman's privilege to understand men. That's how we help. We can't always tell a man this, but sometimes one gives us the chance, as you have. You're calling yourself a failure because you haven't overturned in a few months a system which has been growing up for twenty-five years. If you had been a year getting sick you wouldn't expect your doctor to cure you in a day, would you?"

"That's so; no, of course not."

"Certainly you wouldn't. But let me tell you, you have made your fight here and the whole country has heard about it. Strange how little things sometimes bring big results. But it's the way of the world, Mr. Whittleback. Did you ever hear of the spider that saved a nation? We tell it to the children."

"No," said Mr. Whittleback, "tell me about it sometime. But finish up with me."

"You've done your best, haven't you?"

You've done it with the idea of helping the people?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Whittleback, "I'll take my oath on it."

"Then you've won, in my opinion; but what does my opinion amount to?"

"It amounts to a whole lot," said Mr. Whittleback earnestly, "and it's worth all it has cost to hear you say that. But I'm done with it. Now that Fairfield's beaten some of them want me to run next fall, but I'm going to let 'em alone, wouldn't you?"

"Yes and no. You are done with that part of Politics, but you are not going to forget that you're a citizen. But you will think I am preaching, Mr. Whittleback. I never talked so much on such a subject in my life before, I assure you."

"It's blamed good preaching. You missed your calling."

Miss Alnor was more beautiful than ever in her enthusiasm, Mr. Whittleback thought.

"Thank you. And we do our duty as citi-

zens," she continued, "when we assist in teaching the people through the children to be honest and virtuous and unselfish and to understand that the only real democracy is a government that is run in the interests of the majority — the majority of hands and mouths, not the majority of dollars; that the success of a democracy depends upon the honesty and virtue and intelligence of the individual citizen; that reforms come from the bottom up, from the men in the mills and in the factories, on the farms and in the shops, as a result of their honesty, virtue and intelligence. The people must be taught to appreciate the men in Politics who are honest in purpose — for there are such men in Politics — and to follow their leadership and to give them moral support as well as votes. And men like you, Mr. Whittleback, can do as much in private life with their influence and money as they can in public life; some men, because of their temperament and character, can do more. I think you are one of those who can do more."

"But I can't do it alone," exclaimed Mr.

Whittleback, with earnestness. "You've laid out the program and it's a good one, but it's a program for two, and now you've got to do your part. What do you say? Will you do it?"

"I say," replied Miss Alnor, with a twinkle in her eye, "that you're very blunt and very abrupt, but very sensible and very nice."

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"I'll be blessed if Scouten is so bad after all."

CHAPTER XXX

VARIOUS opinions prevailed as to why Mr. Whittleback had not received the nomination for Member of Assembly. Some declared the Hon. Mr. Brandywine had intervened at the last minute and ordered The Organization to turn him down because he was not acceptable to the corporations. Others were of the opinion that Mr. Fairfield had corrupted the delegates by the generous use of legal tender; while many who had always envied Mr. Whittleback's popularity gravely shook their heads and declared they had never thought well of him anyway and that he was defeated "because he could not come up to the mark." Mr. Windy, who, because of his years of service to The Organization, was supposed to voice the sentiments of that honorable body, gravely announced that Mr. Whittleback's defeat was an evidence of The Organization's friendship for the working man.

The Public generally, however, long remained in entire ignorance of the real reason for the Convention's action, which impels us to the observation that our opinions regarding many matters of our political history would undergo material revision if we only knew what took place behind the scenes.

After his return from the County Fair Mr. Dusenbury set out upon an expedition in the interests of Science. He had long contemplated a trip to England for the purpose of making certain observations in that part of the globe in order to elucidate further his Law of Mutual Attraction, but his antipathy to traveling alone had caused him to defer the journey. The visit of Captain Berwick to this country and the desire of that gentleman to return home was considered by Mr. Dusenbury an auspicious omen. For some time the Sky View Home Club received letters from him relating his excursions in England, but all communication from him suddenly ceased and he was never heard from afterward. The most diligent inquiries addressed to the several American con-

suls in that country failed to elicit any information as to his fate; and it was long a disputed question in Sky View as to what had befallen this worthy man. The women of the village, however, who had always entertained a profound respect for him, concluded that he met his death in pursuit of scientific information, and that he died, as he had lived, a martyr to Science.

The Hon. John L. Whodd, after serving his time in the Senate, was rewarded by the State Organization with the important office of State Commissioner of Excise. In that position he gave great satisfaction to the saloon keepers, and would have been nominated for Lieutenant Governor had he not died as the result of drinking too much at a grand banquet given at the Capital by The National Brewers' Association to celebrate the defeat of the Bill which gave the people the right to say by their votes whether or not liquor should be longer sold in the State.

And now we must bid farewell to Mr. Whit-

tleback, for he belongs to another. A short time after a certain never-to-be-forgotten conversation the School Board of Sky View received the resignation of its principal, and before the school term was ended she and Mr. Whittleback were married; indeed, to be exact, the happy event occurred upon the anniversary of that public meeting at which the groom had received his first signal ovation and had been hailed as the village's most distinguished citizen. In this light he is still regarded by his fellow townsmen, and if you visit Sky View to-day you have but to mention his name to have recounted to you a long list of his virtues. And here we leave him in the bosom of his family,—for there is a real little Nat Whittleback by this time,—but we do not leave him with a feeling that his work proved a failure; for although his name seldom appears in the daily press, which was once so fond of discussing him, many men have risen to fame and won the Public's approval by putting into practice his ideals and by advocating that very principle of popular government for which he

stood, but which it was permitted to him only to early call to the attention of the people. Because of his work — and theirs — upon the old America dominated by Privilege and Party there is rising the New America of Equality and Equal Justice; an America where Right shall count for more than Might, where Manhood shall count for more than Money, where service to the Public shall count for more than service to a Party; and when these things shall have come to pass, we shall begin a new era in the history of the Republic.







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